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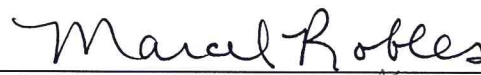
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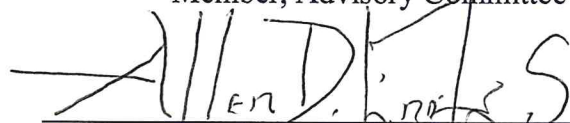
The Effects of Strong Ties on Socialization

By

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THE EFFECTS OF STRONG TIES ON SOCIALIZATION

By

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Bachelor's of Business Administration
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2013

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of
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for the degree of
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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my mother and paternal grandfather, for they have taught me that doing anything worthwhile in life requires effort, courage, and spirit. "If you cannot go a day without thinking about doing something, then go do it."—Gramps

Acknowledgements

First, I would like to give my thesis committee thanks for their time, commitment, and patience. My advisor, Dr. Beth Polin, has been instrumental in my development as an aspiring academic and she has been an exceptional role model to me. I will forever be indebted to her for helping me realize the passion I have for research, as well as her constant encouragement and devotion to my success. Dr. Allen Engle and Dr. Marcel Robles never failed to provide me with wisdom, expertise, and guidance throughout this process and I am beyond appreciative of their faith in me. I hope to one day be capable of achieving the level success that three of you have. I would also like to give special thanks to my fellow graduate assistant, Benji Aspillaga, for his thoughtful words and frequent kind reminders that the hard work put into this thesis would someday pay dividend. Lastly, I would like to thank the rest of the MMIB faculty and staff for their genuine interest in my work and future success.

Abstract

Organizations that successfully socialize newcomers benefit from effective

workforces comprised of employees who experience higher job performance,

satisfaction, and commitment. Organizational insiders, known as social agents, play an

integral role in facilitating the socialization of newcomers, as these individuals make up

the networks in which newcomers work. To better understand in what ways social agents

help assimilate newcomers, a more thorough understanding is needed concerning how tie

strength between individuals facilitates the socialization process.

This thesis has two objectives. First, two types of antecedents to strong tie

development are explored: orientation practices deployed by organizations to promote

interaction between newcomers and social agents; and proactive behaviors that

newcomers exhibit toward social agents to foster strong relationships. The second

objective of this thesis is to examine how strong ties impact newcomers' frequency of

asking social agents for information, also known as direct inquiry. Previous research has

suggested that higher frequencies of direct inquiry positively influence socialization

outcomes (e.g., Morrison, 1993b). The completion of both objectives will provide a new

perspective for studying the information seeking patterns of newcomers.

To test the hypotheses regarding the antecedents to strong ties and the effects of

strong ties on newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry, data was gathered from full-time

employees whose tenures' ranged from six months to one year. A total of 154 responses

were collected, and regression analysis was used to statistically test the relationships

between variables. Results did not support the proposed antecedents to strong ties. Mixed

results appear for the relationships between separate tie strength indicators and newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry; thus partially supporting the postulation that tie strength does affect information seeking. Mixed results also emerge for socialization outcome variables. The findings suggest that the frequency of direct inquiry positively affects a dimension of newcomers' job performance, but not job satisfaction or organizational commitment. Following a discussion of the results, the limitations and strengths of this thesis are discussed, academic and practitioner implications are offered, and future research directions are identified.

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Chapter 1: The Need for Integrating Socialization and Social Network Research

Organizational socialization is the process of how organizational newcomers learn how to appropriately behave in and navigate through their new organizations, as well as perform a new job or role, and navigate through their new organizations. It is well noted in the socialization literature that newcomers experience uncertainty and ambiguity upon organizational entry (e.g., Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), and social agents may help reduce those negative experiences by helping newcomers make sense of the new environment (Reichers, 1987). Considering the importance of social agents, newcomers' social networks—specifically, their interpersonal networks—at work impact the socialization process, as they must utilize their connections to agents to access information. Research suggests that newcomers who acquire essential resources and subsequently become socialized typically experience higher levels of job performance (Feldman, 1981), job satisfaction (Louis, 1980), commitment (Reichers, 1987), role clarity (Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolfe, Klein, & Gardner, 1994), and self-efficacy (Bauer, Bodner, Erdogan, Truxillo, & Tucker, 2007) in addition to lower stress levels (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992) and less intention to leave the organization (Morrison, 1993b). The plethora of positive outcomes regarding successful socialization has been a driving force in stimulating significant interest on the subject.

Management scholars' fascination with socialization has resulted in a large body of research from different perspectives (Klein & Heuser, 2008). These perspectives include the following: the stages perspective, which studies the sequence newcomers follow to become fully functional employees (Feldman, 1976); the content perspective, or

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examining what newcomers must actually learn to be socialized (Chao et al., 1994); the tactics and practices perspective, or investigating organizational attempts to shape newcomers' initial experiences after entry (Jones, 1986); the newcomer perspective, examining how newcomers proactively adapt to their new roles and environments (Morrison, 1993b); and the social agents perspective, or how social agents impact newcomers' initial experiences and behaviors (Bravo, Peiró, Rodriguez, & Whitely, 2003). The relationship among the tactics and practices, newcomer, and social agents perspectives, however, remains underdeveloped.

From the tactics and practices perspective, numerous studies have been conducted examining the effects of Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) and Jones' (1986) tactical dimensions (e.g., Bauer et al., 2007; Bravo et al., 2003; Saks, Uggerslev, & Fassina, 2007); however, this research fails to examine the effectiveness of specific onboarding activities within Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) dimensions that connect newcomers to social agents who are situated in the same network, and the benefits that newcomers may experience from those activities. The newcomer perspective has produced a sizeable body of research supporting the idea that newcomers who behave proactively experience more positive socialization outcomes (e.g., Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003). While some existing research attempts to categorize the various types of proactive behaviors (e.g., Cooper-Thomas, Anderson, & Cash, 2011; Cooper-Thomas & Burke, 2012), there is a dearth of research examining which specific proactive behaviors foster characteristics of strong relationships—that is, indicators of strong ties in social networks—between newcomers and social agents. Speaking to the social agents perspective, substantial research exists supporting the postulation that social agents serve

as information resources for newcomers to utilize during the adjustment period (e.g., Bravo et al., 2003; Louis, Posner, & Powell, 1983; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Contrarily, no research examines how the strength of relationships between newcomers and social agents affects newcomers' use of information seeking behaviors within his or her social network.

Considering these research needs from a practitioner standpoint, how can organizations be capable of designing onboarding programs that connect newcomers with integral social agents to further the socialization process? Moreover, how will managers be able to identify employees' behaviors directed toward building relationships so that they may encourage newcomers to inquire about essential information? These research needs must be fulfilled so that the relationship among the tactics, newcomer, and social agents perspectives may be properly developed, and a more complete understanding of how social networks impact the socialization process can be achieved.

Overview

The aim of this thesis is to attempt to at least partially fulfill the above-mentioned research needs by building on the independent literatures regarding socialization and social networks as well as a small body of research examining the reciprocal exchange between the two. This thesis has two objectives: (a) explore antecedents to strong tie development between newcomers and social agents, and (b) examine how strong ties influence socialization outcomes through information seeking. Brass (2012) noted that network development among individuals, or interpersonal networks, is the result of multiple antecedents (e.g., employee similarity, work culture, organizational structure); therefore, the accomplishment of the first objective is critical to understanding why ties

between newcomers and social agents may develop as strong or weak during the socialization process. Previous network research suggests that strong ties result in greater resource sharing (Wellman & Frank, 2011), but it is still unclear as to how tie strength between newcomers and social agents affects newcomers' use of direct inquiry, which has been observed as the most effective information seeking behavior (Morrison, 1993b). The second objective is centered on examining the proposition of tie strength influencing newcomers' use of direct inquiry and how the frequency of direct inquiry mediates the relationship between tie strength and socialization outcomes. The accomplishment of these two objectives will advance both bodies of literature, and future academic and practitioner applications will be possible. The broader and stronger connection of the two literatures will increase the value of the management discipline as well as its utility in cross-disciplinary studies.

Chapter 2 reviews of socialization literature regarding the organizational tactics, newcomer, and social agents research perspectives will be provided, followed by a review of antecedents and outcomes of interpersonal networks. Chapter 2 will conclude with a review of research that has previously attempted to apply social network theories and concepts to socialization. Chapter 3 will offer a conceptual model and hypotheses regarding antecedents to three strong tie indicators in addition to an information seeking behavior and socialization outcomes. Chapter 4 will explain the method of this study, and Chapter 5 will present the results of a survey data collection testing the proposed hypotheses. Chapter 6 will provide a discussion of the findings and the level of support for each hypothesis. Lastly, Chapter 7 will conclude this thesis with a discussion of study

limitations and strengths, academic and practical implications, and future research

directions that may derive from this work.

Chapter 2: A Review of Socialization and Social Network Research

The inherent intrigue of organizational socialization has attracted considerable

scholarship and research since the 1960's, while the study of social networks in recent

years has yielded significant discoveries, consequently stimulating much interest on the

subject (Borgatti & Halgin, 2011; Carpenter, Li, & Jiang, 2012). A formal definition of

socialization and its desired outcomes are briefly outlined first in this chapter, followed

by reviews of research from the tactics and practices, newcomer proactivity, and social

agents perspectives. Next, research pertaining to antecedents and outcomes of

interpersonal social networks is reviewed. This chapter concludes with a review of the

social network approach to socialization, which includes literature that has examined the

role of social networks in the socialization process.

Defining Socialization and Its Outcomes

Organizational entry is a critical time for newcomers, as they must adjust to a new

environment by assessing external cues and their overall perceived fit with the

organization. The arrival of newcomers is also important to organizations due to the

benefits of properly assimilating those newcomers into the existing workforce. This

process of assimilation and sense making is known as organizational socialization

(Feldman, 1976; Jones, 1986) and has been formally defined as the "process in which an

individual acquires the social knowledge and skills necessary to assume an organizational

role" (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p. 211). During this process, newcomers may

experience reality shock or surprise based on premade assumptions (Jones, 1986; Louis,

1980) and newcomers' initial experiences are generally found to be the most challenging.

Discrepancies in expectations and reality create the need for newcomers to learn about the new organization, role, and social agents by cognitively attaching meaning to events, policies, and procedures (Klein & Heuser, 2008). The socialization process may also be facilitated by the influence of social agents through information sharing and organizations strategically deploying certain tactics, such as onboarding and training programs (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). It is also important to note that socialization not only relates to the adjustment of newcomers, but also the influence newcomers may have on new organizations (Ashforth, Sluss, & Harrison, 2007). Although socialization is not limited to the adjustment of newcomers, that is the focus of this thesis.

Socialization Outcomes

Socialization has been linked to a variety of important outcomes for newcomers as alluded to in Chapter 1. Increased self-efficacy and job performance, for example, can result in higher levels of productivity, which stands to benefit an organization's operations and bottom line. The two types of positive outcomes associated with successful socialization are proximal and distal outcomes.

Proximal outcomes. Proximal outcomes, or adjustment indicators, suggest the degree to which newcomers are adjusting to their new roles within the organization (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012) and may be measured early in the adjustment process or shortly after entry. The proximal outcomes of successful socialization include acceptance by insiders (Bauer & Green, 1998), role clarity (Bauer & Green, 1998; Chao et al., 1994), and performance self-efficacy (Bauer et al., 2007; Gruman, Saks, & Zweig, 2006). Newcomers' initial experiences and interactions with social agents are believed to impact proximal outcomes (Ashforth et al., 2007), which in turn impact newcomers' guiding

perceptions carried throughout his or her organizational tenure. Overall, understanding proximal outcomes is necessary to predict and maximize distal socialization outcomes. Adjustment indicators mediate the relationships between individual and organizational antecedents and those distal outcomes that represent successful socialization (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012).

Distal outcomes. Distal outcomes are key to studying what constitutes successful socialization, as they indicate "the degree to which newcomer organizational socialization matters to organizational outcomes such as job attitudes and actual newcomer behavior" (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012, p. 103); that is, newcomer behavior is aligned with what the organization deems acceptable. Successful socialization has been linked to distal outcomes such as job attitudes (satisfaction, commitment, intentions to turnover; Bauer et al., 2007), job performance (Morrison, 1993b), person-organization (PO) fit (Kim, Cable, & Kim, 2005), stress (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992), and ethics (Hannah, 2007). Distal outcomes are measured quite differently than proximal outcomes because they are the final result of successful socialization; therefore, distal outcomes must be measured later or at the end of the socialization process. The role of time in the adjustment process is an integral aspect that impacts when and how distal outcomes are evaluated (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012), and tenure has been the default measure for researchers to use when examining these outcomes (Ashforth et al., 2007). Klein and Heuser (2008) posited that by conceptualizing the outcomes of socialization, the collection of outcomes might continue to expand, thus stimulating future research from the different socialization research perspectives.

Organizational Socialization Tactics and Practices

This organizational socialization tactics and practices perspective is most relevant to this thesis, as prior tactics and practices research focuses on how organizations can enhance the socialization process, and it is an objective of this thesis to examine how those tactics and practices may facilitate work and social relationships between newcomers and social agents. The organizational tactics and practices perspective is popular among socialization scholars, as research from this perspective has been conducted since the late 1970s. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) defined socialization tactics as "the ways in which the experiences of individuals in transition from one role to another are structured for them by others in the organization" (p. 230); and these tactics may be used whenever newcomers or insiders cross an organizational boundary, such as initial organizational entry or entry into a new department. Within this research perspective, studies have traditionally focused on identifying tactical dimensions (Jones, 1986; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979) and linking tactics to a variety of socialization outcomes (Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999; Bauer et al., 2007; Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002; Louis et al., 1983). Emerging research from this perspective has been centered on the exact practices organizations use to socialize newcomers—most notably, onboarding programs (Klein, Polin, & Sutton, 2015). This section includes parts that first review research regarding the classic tactical typologies presented by Van Maanen and Schein (1979) and Jones (1986). Next, onboarding practices will be explored, and then Klein and Heuser's (2008) Inform-Welcome-Guide (IWG) framework to categorizing onboarding activities will be reviewed.

Tactical Dimensions

As previously mentioned, the organizational socialization tactics and practices perspective has been popular among scholars for several decades, and has given way to a sizeable body of research. The majority of this research has focused on examining the utility Van Maanan and Schein's (1979) tactical dimensions and Jones' (1986) reconceptualization of those dimensions, which are both discussed below in more detail.

Van Maanen and Schein's tactical dimensions. The most widely examined typology of tactical dimensions is proposed by Van Maanen and Schein (1979) and is composed of six dimensions that lie on a bipolar continuum, as displayed in Table 1.

Table 1: Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) Six Tactical Dimensions

1. Collective vs. Individual
2. Formal vs. Informal
3. Sequential vs. Random
4. Fixed vs. Variable
5. Serial vs. Disjunctive
6. Investiture vs. Divestiture

Source: Van Maanen, J., & Schein, E. H. (1979). Toward a theory of organizational socialization, In B. M. Staw (Ed.), *Research in organizational behavior* (Vol. 1, pp. 209-264). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

First, collective socialization tactics includes grouping newcomers together for a common set of experiences, while individual tactics refers to isolating newcomers so that each has a unique set of experiences. Formal tactics are those planned by the organization with the aim to separate newcomers from insiders so that newcomers experience activities/events specifically meant for their assimilation and also occur during a defined period of time; informal tactics refer to those tactics that do not differentiate newcomers

and insiders and newcomer assimilation occurs through trial and error while on the job. Sequential socialization tactics include an identifiable sequence of activities/events that result in newcomers assuming their roles, as opposed to random tactics, where the activities/events happen unexpectedly or are continuously changing. Fixed tactics provide an established timeframe for the steps involved with a newcomer assuming his or her role, but variable tactics provide no such timeframe. The serial dimension includes tactics that integrate experienced insiders into the assimilation process to provide newcomers with appropriate, job related information and training, whereas the disjunctive dimension involves tactics that do not provide such experienced insiders or role models to teach newcomers. Finally, investiture socialization tactics seek to promote newcomers' individual identities and personal traits, as opposed to divestiture tactics, which seek to alter or remove newcomers' identities and personal traits. While only theoretical, this tactical dimension typology has drawn considerable interest in the literature and continues to be one of the most frequently utilized typologies in the study of socialization (Ashforth, Saks, & Lee, 1997; Jones, 1986; Klein & Heuser, 2008).

The utility of these six dimensions has been empirically tested (e.g., Jones, 1986) and their relevance may be best observed in an organization's onboarding program, as each tactic differentially requires newcomers to engage in varying activities and experiences so as to facilitate the socialization process. Tactical variance provides differentiating circumstances in which newcomers may interact with social agents. As a result, the strength of relationships between newcomers and social agents may be contingent on characteristics of the tactics deployed. Given the varying circumstances for interaction and newcomers' information source preferences (Bravo et al., 2003), Van

Maanen and Schein's (1979) organizational tactics may not only have substantial effects

on newcomer information seeking behaviors (Bauer et al., 2007) and socialization

outcomes (Jones, 1986), but also tie strength between newcomers and social agents.

Jones' tactical dimensions. Jones (1986) reconceptualized the typology proposed

by Van Maanen & Schein (1979) in the first empirical study of socialization tactics, as

shown in Table 2. According to Jones (1986), the collective, formal, sequential, fixed,

serial, and investiture dimensions of Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) typology represent

institutionalized socialization tactics—these dimensions provide information and

structure to reduce newcomers' feelings of uncertainty. Oppositely, the individual,

informal, random, variable, disjunctive, and divestiture dimensions encourage newcomers

to develop unique approaches to their new jobs (Saks & Gruman, 2012), which Jones

(1986) labeled individualized socialization tactics.

Table 2: Jones' (1986) Tactical Dimensions

Foci	Institutional Tactics (reduce uncertainty)	Individualized Tactics (develop new approach)
Context	Collective	Individual
	Formal	Informal
Content	Sequential	Random
	Fixed	Variable
Social	Serial	Disjunctive
	Investiture	Divestiture

Jones, G. R. (1986). Socialization tactics, self-efficacy, and newcomers' adjustments to organizations. *Academy of Management Journal*, *29*(2), 262-279. doi:10.2307/256188

Jones (1986) proposed that Van Maanen & Schein's (1979) six tactical

dimensions represent three main foci: context, content, and social aspects. First, the

collective (vs. individual) and formal (vs. informal) dimensions represent the context in which organizations provide resources to newcomers (Ashforth et al., 1997). Secondly, sequential (vs. random) and fixed (vs. variable) dimensions pertain to the content learned by newcomers during the socialization process. Lastly, serial (vs. disjunctive) and investiture (vs. divestiture) dimensions represent social aspects, or important social cues, necessary for newcomer learning to occur (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002). In support of Jones' (1986) refinement of Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) tactical typology, the empirical study found results suggesting that institutional tactics were negatively related to role ambiguity, role conflict, and intention to quit; individualized tactics, however, were found to have positive relationships with role ambiguity and role conflict. Additionally, institutional tactics were positively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and role orientation as opposed to individualized tactics. These results suggest that organizations using structured tactics to socialize newcomers more effectively alleviate newcomer uncertainty (Jones, 1986).

The findings of Jones' (1986) empirical study served as a catalyst in the organizational tactics and practices research perspective; therefore, significant interest from scholars regarding the utilization, outcomes, mediators, and moderators of socialization tactics led to an increase of studies conducted from this perspective. Two meta-analyses by Bauer and colleagues (2007) and Saks and colleagues (2007) found results similar to Jones' (1986) study in that institutionalized socialization tactics negatively related to role ambiguity, role conflict, and intentions to quit, while being positively related to newcomers' fit perceptions, role clarity, self-efficacy, job satisfaction, social acceptance, and role orientation. Other studies have found positive

relationships between socialization tactics and outcomes such as social integration (Anakwe & Greenhaus, 1999; Bravo et al., 2003), PO fit (Cable & Parsons, 2001; Kim et al., 2005), expatriate adjustment and proactivity (Feldman, Folks, & Turnley, 1998), as well as negative relationships with role conflict (Bravo et al., 2003) and anxiety (Feldman et al., 1998). Research from the socialization tactics perspective has also focused on the various mediators and moderators of socialization tactics, such as Gruman and colleagues' (2006) study suggesting feedback and information seeking to moderate the separate relationships between socialization tactics, PO fit, job satisfaction, social integration, and commitment. Comparably, Cooper-Thomas and Anderson (2002) found results that suggest information acquisition mediates the relationship between socialization tactics and both job satisfaction and commitment.

Overall, there is a general consensus in the literature that socialization tactics may have substantial effects on multiple socialization outcomes (e.g., Bauer et al., 2007; Jones, 1986; Gruman et al., 2006); however, more research is needed from this perspective to determine exactly what practices organizations should use to successfully socialize newcomers (Ashforth et al., 2007; Saks & Gruman, 2012). Few studies have been conducted to address this research need (e.g., Klein et al., 2015; Klein & Weaver, 2000; Wesson & Gogus, 2005), but this particularly small body of research suggests a positive relationship between formal tactics and newcomer learning. It is encouraging to observe scholars giving more attention to this subject and a more thorough review of research spanning such practices is provided in the next part of this section.

Onboarding Practices

Over the last decade, the term *onboarding* has emerged as a term closely associated with socialization (Wanberg, 2012) and is often used interchangeably with socialization despite the two concepts having fundamental differences. Previous research has attempted to clarify how onboarding and socialization differ in terms of duration, the number of individuals involved in each, as well as the number of work-related facets (e.g., behavioral changes at work, relationships with colleagues, job satisfaction) of newcomers' work-lives that are impacted (Saks & Gruman, 2012; Wanous & Reichers, 2000; Wesson & Gogus, 2005). According to Klein and Polin (2012), onboarding and socialization must be differentiated to better understand how onboarding practices implemented by organizations or Human Resources (HR) departments facilitate socialization and how these practices result in valuable outcomes for organizations and newcomers alike.

Perhaps the most notable difference between onboarding and socialization is that organizations may only decide what onboarding practices to offer newcomers, and newcomers only decide when and if to take action to utilize the resources provided to them by the organization. Klein and Polin (2012) defined onboarding as "all formal and informal practices, programs, and policies enacted or engaged in by an organization or its agents to facilitate newcomer adjustment" (p. 268); this definition differs from those offered in other research that has equated onboarding and socialization (e.g., Bauer & Erdogan, 2010). These practices, policies, and procedures put in place by HR departments are meant to provide structure to newcomers' initial experiences and facilitate the behavioral changes needed for socialization.

Since socialization is a process, it can be inferred that socialization is a sequence of changes that newcomers experience internally. Onboarding may be viewed as a part of successful socialization (Klein et al., 2015) since the practices, policies, and procedures associated with onboarding are meant to reduce uncertainty and ambiguity (Allen, 2006) while providing newcomers with a better understanding of their new roles (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2005; Klein & Weaver, 2000). While newcomers have the capacity to be proactive (Morrison, 1993b) and organizations can design onboarding programs to facilitate newcomer proactivity, the newcomers themselves must elect to capitalize on available resources. The extent to which onboarding practices benefit newcomers may depend on newcomers' disposition toward proactivity (Klein & Polin, 2012; Louis, 1980).

Another important difference between onboarding and socialization is duration. Socialization is an ongoing, lifelong process (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979) whereas onboarding has an established timeframe within each organization (Klein & Polin, 2012). Van Maanen and Schein (1979) note that while socialization is most intense during organizational entry, socialization occurs at any time when there is a change, such as alterations to individuals' jobs, work environments, or teams, for example; during these somewhat subtle changes, individuals must learn to adjust their behaviors accordingly and onboarding activities are not likely to be present. Also because of the temporal rigidity of onboarding programs, fewer people are involved with onboarding when compared to socialization (Saks & Gruman, 2012) due to the pre-established structure of the program. In theory, socialization begins during recruitment before an individual

crosses an organizational boundary (Ashforth et al., 2007), thus increasing the number of social agents impacting the socialization process and extending its duration.

It is important that future studies more frequently differentiate between onboarding and socialization, as these distinct differences suggest that onboarding is a critical part of successful socialization (Klein et al., 2015). By acknowledging these differences, researchers may more effectively examine the utility of specific onboarding practices in facilitating socialization. Moreover, an in-depth examination of specific practices may provide a more salient understanding of the role social agents play in onboarding programs.

Inform-Welcome-Guide (IWG) Framework

Klein and Heuser (2008) noted that socialization is a learning process and while designing onboarding programs, organizations should consider what activities are most likely to enhance newcomers' learning. To better organize and understand what activities facilitate the learning of different socialization content areas, Klein and Heuser (2008) proposed the IWG framework consisting of three onboarding activity categories: the inform category, which encompasses those activities aimed at providing newcomers with information; the welcome category, including onboarding activities centered on celebrating the arrival of newcomers into organizations; and the guide category, which is comprised of activities directed toward helping newcomers navigate the transition.

The largest category of Klein and Heuser's (2008) IWG framework is the inform-category. It is well established in the socialization literature that newcomers rely on information to reduce uncertainty and to make sense of the new environment (e.g., Morrison, 1993a; 1993b). An assortment of methods for organizations to provide

newcomers with information exist; thus, the inform category is subdivided into communication, resources, and training. Inform-communication practices entail activities that offer newcomers opportunities to engage in communication with a variety of social agents (e.g., newcomers being invited to meet with senior leaders). Realistic job previews (RJPs) have received the most attention of any activity within the inform-communication subcategory with studies examining when and how RJPs work (Hom, Griffeth, Palich, & Bracker, 1998), as well as the effectiveness of RJPs concerning job attitudes and reduced turnover (Phillips, 1998). Aside from RJPs, other research concerning inform-communication practices has focused on the roles of social agents as information sources (Morrison, 1993b; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992; Reichers, 1987); however, there is a paucity of research examining the effectiveness of strategically including social agents in onboarding activities. As a whole, little research on inform-communication practices exists, yet it is clear that information is essential to socialization, and communicating more information to newcomers may enhance desired socialization outcomes (Morrison, 1993b).

Inform-resources practices are centered on making necessary materials and supplies available to newcomers (e.g., having newcomers' workspaces ready upon their arrival; Klein & Heuser, 2008). While there is no research on the effectiveness of onboarding activities in this subcategory, an abundance of research exists regarding newcomer proactivity, which is relative to inform-resources practices as newcomers must be proactive in order to capitalize on the materials made available for them (Klein & Polin, 2012; Morrison, 1993b). Research on newcomer proactivity has linked newcomer levels of proactivity to individual differences (Crant, 2000; Frese, Kring, Soose, &

Zempel, 1996) and contextual or environmental cues (Gruman et al., 2006; Kim et al., 2005). Previous work on newcomer proactivity also suggests that newcomers vary their use of information seeking behaviors in addition to varying the target information source (Chan & Schmitt, 2000) and a number of factors influence those decisions (Morrison, 2002a). Given the significance of newcomer proactivity during the socialization process, it is important to know what onboarding practices organizations should implement to foster newcomer proactivity in addition to understanding when and how resources should be provided to newcomers (Klein & Polin, 2012). A review of newcomer proactivity, its antecedents, and the types of newcomer proactive behaviors is provided in the next section of this chapter.

Inform-training onboarding practices are directed toward facilitating newcomer skill development and knowledge acquisition through the use of training and development and orientation training efforts (e.g., newcomers receiving on-the-job training; Klein & Heuser, 2008). Similar to the other inform subcategories, there is little research relating to inform-training practices. Initial studies regarding inform-training practices focused on the availability and usefulness of newcomer training and development (e.g., Louis et al., 1983), and while studies examining availability were mixed, those studies exploring newcomers' perceived usefulness of the training suggested positive outcomes (Klein, Fan, & Preacher, 2006). More recent research on orientation training programs has suggested a positive relationship between formal onboarding training programs and newcomer learning and socialization (Wesson & Gogus, 2005). Other than the studies mentioned above, research on inform-training practices is underdeveloped despite the continued use of onboarding programs in

organizations (Klein & Polin, 2012), which is not optimal given the negative

consequences of poorly designed orientation programs (Lundberg & Young, 1997). It can

be conceived, however, that information-training activities are necessary to help

newcomers adjust, as previous research on training programs has been linked to greater

learning of the organization (Klein & Weaver, 2000).

The second major category of the IWG framework is the welcome-category.

Compared to the inform-category that focuses only on newcomers' informational needs,

the welcome-category focuses on newcomers' emotional needs by acknowledging and

celebrating the arrival of newcomers (e.g., a new employee welcome celebration being

held; Klein & Polin, 2012). Welcome-category activities are important to relationship

development and provide newcomers with a sense of social support and appreciation

(Fisher, 1985; Lundberg & Young, 1997). Previous research suggests that welcome

activities are more effective when strategically planned, rather than randomly occurring

(Rollag, Parise, & Cross, 2005), so organizations should structure multiple instances

where newcomers can interact with social agents. Louis and colleagues (1983) claimed

that newcomers' interactions with social agents are among the most helpful socialization

activities; Rollag and colleagues' (2005) findings support that claim—welcoming

activities may be utilized by newcomers to access information and other resources needed

for successful socialization. Multiple studies have shown newcomers' interactions and

relationships with a variety of social agents differentially impacting the socialization

process (Bravo et al., 2003; Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Gruman et al., 2006); thus, welcome

activities provide newcomers with opportunities to establish relationships and participate

in interactions with a wide range of social agents. Klein and Polin (2012) noted that while

inform activities are definitely critical, those activities may be insufficient in providing newcomers with everything needed for adjustment, hence welcome activities expand newcomers' potential resources in terms of agents that can provide essential social capital. Welcome-category activities offer newcomers opportunities to develop relationships and receive social support, information, and other resources needed for adjustment.

The last category of the IWG framework encompasses guide-category activities, which are meant to provide a newcomer with a directing social agent who will assist them in navigating the transition (e.g., assigning mentors to newcomers; Klein & Polin, 2012). Little research exists that examines the effects of newcomers receiving hands-on guides after entry, but Rollag and colleagues (2005) discovered that providing a "buddy" to newcomers provides an immediate information resource and confidant that can facilitate work and social relationships that a supervisor cannot. The lack of research investigating the impact coworkers and supervisors may have as guides is surprising, given that previous research on information seeking suggests newcomers may need multiple guides as a result of preferences to obtain different information from different sources (Klein & Polin, 2012; Morrison, 1993b). However, considerable research exists that links mentoring guides to positive socialization outcomes (Allen, McManus, & Russell, 1999; Anakwe & Greenhous, 1999; Schrodt, Cawyer, & Sanders, 2003). Moreover, it should be noted from the mentoring literature that formal and informal mentors are likely to produce varying outcomes (Chao, Walz, & Gardner, 1992; Raabe & Beehr, 2003; Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000) due to the design of mentoring programs and availability of mentors (Holton, 2001); thus, variability in mentor-related guide

activities may exist as well (Klein & Polin, 2012). While guide activities have the potential to be an operational means for facilitating newcomer learning and growth, future research is needed that examines the nature of newcomers' relationships with guides other than mentors, such as coworkers, supervisors, and HR representatives (Klein & Polin, 2012), so that the effectiveness of guide activities may be better understood.

Summary

The organizational tactics and practices perspective has produced a vast body of research that reveals how organizations attempt to socialize newcomers. While Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) and Jones' (1986) tactical dimensions have been frequently examined as antecedents to numerous socialization outcomes (e.g., Bauer et al., 2007), less attention has been given to what specific onboarding activities facilitate newcomers' learning of socialization content (Klein et al., 2015). The IWG framework (Klein & Heuser, 2008) offers a novel approach to linking formal onboarding activities—what Jones' (1986) would label as institutional tactics—to the various proposed content dimensions (e.g., Chao et al., 1994). The total body of research regarding the exact activities within the IWG framework is sparse, but is garnering more attention from scholars (e.g., Klein et al., 2015). The growing interest of onboarding activities is encouraging and as future studies are conducted, the organizational tactics and practices perspective of socialization research will become more complete.

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Newcomer Proactivity

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In order for newcomers to benefit from the tactics and practices implemented by organizations in addition to their relationships with social agents, newcomers must behave proactively so as to utilize the resources at their disposal. Early socialization

research was often criticized for not considering how newcomers may facilitate the socialization process, but that is no longer the case as scholars have since exerted substantial effort to exploring the role that newcomers may assume in accelerating their own adjustment after entry. Berger (1979) conceived the notion that the theoretical underpinnings of socialization are similar to Uncertainty Reduction Theory (URT), which states that individuals experiencing high levels of uncertainty are motivated to reduce those levels; hence newcomers may behave in ways to proactively alleviate uncertainty and make the new environment more predictable. Crant (2000) defined proactive behavior as "taking initiative in improving current circumstances or creating new ones; it involves challenging the status quo rather than passively adapting to present conditions" (p. 436). In a socialization context, proactive behaviors close the discrepancies between expectations and reality through information acquisition from insiders (Morrison, 2002a) or identifying and executing opportunities to positively change controllable circumstances relating to a newcomer's job, interpersonal relationships, and general fit within the organization (Gruman et al., 2006). Prior research has linked proactivity to a number of positive socialization outcomes. For example, Ostroff and Kozlowski (1992) found that newcomers who proactively experimented at work experienced higher levels of task, role, group, and organizational learning. Saks and Ashforth's (1997) study suggested that self-goal setting is positively related to employees' ability to cope with stress, as well as self-observation to be negatively related to task-specific anxiety. Other research has found proactivity to be positively associated with innovation (Scott & Bruce, 1994), leadership effectiveness (Bateman & Crant, 1993), career success (Seibert,

Kraimer, & Crant, 2001), self-efficacy (Gruman et al., 2006), and PO fit (Kim et al., 2005).

Research from the newcomer proactivity perspective typically follows two tracks: antecedents to proactive behavior (e.g., Chan & Schmitt, 2000) and the range of specific proactive behaviors newcomers may exhibit (e.g., Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011). As antecedents to proactive behavior vary, the specific behaviors exhibited by individuals also differ as a result of newcomers' goals directed at reducing uncertainty and creating favorable circumstances (Cooper-Thomas & Burke, 2012).

Antecedents to Proactive Behavior

While there has been a degree of debate among scholars when identifying antecedents to newcomer proactive behavior (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Morrison & Phelps, 1999; Seibert, Kraimer, & Crant, 2001), two sets of antecedents have emerged: first, newcomers' personal dispositions toward proactivity—also as known as proactivity constructs—and other individual differences; and secondly, contextual/environmental cues.

Proactivity constructs/individual differences. A good deal of research concerning individual differences is devoted to capturing the broad concepts of employee proactivity and has produced five major constructs that attempt to measure individuals' disposition towards such behaviors. The first and most widely studied construct is proactive personality (Bateman & Crant, 1993), which seeks to identify differences amongst individuals in the extent to which they take action to change their environments; thus proactive employees are unconstrained by situational forces, identify opportunities and act on them, take initiative in work scenarios, and persevere until meaningful change

occurs (Crant, 2000). Substantial research on the proactive personality construct has been linked to a variety of positive outcomes including higher levels of job performance and task mastery (Crant, 1995; Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Thomas, Whitman, & Viswesaran, 2010), social networking (Thomas et al., 2010), career success (Seibert, Crant, & Kramer, 1999), leadership (Bateman & Crant, 1993; Crant & Bateman, 2000; Deluga, 1998), team performance and social integration (Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Kirkman & Rosen, 1999), and entrepreneurship (Becherer & Maurer, 1999; Crant, 1996). Proactive personality has been applied in a number of contexts and the combined results suggest that proactive personality is an important antecedent to a range of desirable outcomes.

The second construct that seeks to conceptualize and measure employees' proactive behaviors is personal initiative (Frese et al., 1996), which is a behavioral pattern whereby individuals demonstrate self-starting approach to his or her work and he or she goes beyond formal job requirements. Personal initiative is characterized by five elements: it is consistent with the organization's mission; it assumes a long-term focus; it is action-based and goal oriented; it is persistent despite obstacles; and it is self-starting/proactive. Frese and colleagues (1996) found results suggesting that employees' perceptions of job autonomy and work complexity are positively related to personal initiative and these results were interpreted as evidence of socialization through motivation and skill development. Additionally, Speier and Frese (1997) found that self-efficacy partially mediates the relationship between control and complexity at work and personal initiative. Further, Speier and Frese's (1997) results suggested that self-efficacy moderates the relationship between control and complexity at work and introspective

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initiative. Later work by Thomas and colleagues (2010) produced results suggesting that personal initiative positively relates to organizational commitment. Overall, work on the personal initiative construct indicates that by increasing job autonomy and perceptions of self-efficacy may result in more frequent demonstrations of personal initiative, which may result in higher levels of organizational commitment.

A third proactivity construct is taking charge (Morrison & Phelps, 1999) and is defined as constructive efforts by employees to bring about functional change in terms of how work is performed. Morrison and Phelps (1999) found the taking charge construct to be positively related to employees' felt responsibility, self-efficacy, and perceptions of top management openness; therefore employees are more likely to demonstrate taking charge behaviors when they have internalized a sense of responsibility to positively changing the organization, they believe in their capacity to bring about functional change, and when they view top management as supportive of change efforts (Crant, 2000). In regard to individual performance rather than organizational performance, taking charge positively related to employees' job performance (Thomas et al., 2010). Research on this construct has advanced the proactivity literature by conceptualizing initiative-based actions aimed towards improving organizational systems, processes, and procedures.

The fourth proactivity construct in the literature is voice (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Specifically, this construct reflects individuals' inclination to discuss constructive and change-oriented ideas with the intent to improve rather than criticize. Voice behaviors are socially based, as employees that exhibit voice facilitate an understanding amongst other organizational members that change initiatives are needed (Van Dyne, Ang, & Botero, 2003); thus, employees may ensure social costs (e.g., embarrassment,

loss of social support, and animosity) when exhibiting voice behaviors as change initiatives may not align with other employees' beliefs or interests. Alternatively, Van Dyne and colleagues (2003) proposed that employees demonstrating voice behaviors may trigger desirable behavioral actions from other employees while Thomas and colleagues' (2010) study suggested employees that display voice behaviors may experience higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. When compared to other constructs, the voice construct exclusively examines the communication-based component of employee proactivity.

A fifth and less often examined proactivity construct is role breadth self-efficacy (RBSE) (Parker, 1998), which is intended to capture employees' perceived capability of performing a broader set of tasks beyond the technical requirements of a job in addition to exhibiting interpersonal skills. RBSE differs from proactive personality as it expected to change as individuals experience new occurrences (e.g., learning advanced skills) and as the organizational environment changes (Crant, 2000). Parker's (1998) work suggested that RBSE is positively related to a variety of organizational practices aimed at increasing firm effectiveness and employee development such as organizational improvement groups, job enrichment, and job enlargement.

Beyond the aforementioned proactivity constructs, considerable research on other individual differences exists in the literature. Researchers have also investigated personality traits as an antecedent to proactive behaviors. Goldberg's (1993) personality trait taxonomy (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness) is well recognized for being a useful tool in describing individuals' personalities; however, only a few studies exist that apply this taxonomy to the newcomer

proactivity context and these studies have yielded mixed results. Wanberg and Kammeyer-Mueller (2000) found only extraversion and openness to experience to be positively related to proactive behaviors where extroverted individuals sought more feedback from social agents and participated in more relationship building activities; moreover, individuals who scored high in openness to experience sought more feedback and engaged in positive framing. Alternatively, Thomas and colleagues (2010) found positive relationships between proactive behavior and neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, and conscientiousness. Furthermore, Thomas and colleagues (2010) also observed neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness to be positively related to proactive behaviors that increased job performance. These findings align well with Ashford and Black's (1996) study that produced results suggesting newcomers' desire for control positively relates to information seeking, general socializing and networking, job change negotiation, and positive framing, as neuroticism and conscientiousness are often characterized by a sense of control (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000).

Self-efficacy has also been observed as an antecedent to newcomer proactivity and, in general, newcomers that possess higher levels of self-efficacy are more prone to engage in proactive behaviors (Klein & Heuser, 2008). Gruman and colleagues' (2006) study found self-efficacy to be positively related to proactive behaviors such as feedback and information seeking, networking, and building relationships with his or her boss. In regards to the relationship between institutionalized socialization tactics (an environmental cue discussed later) and self-efficacy, Gruman and colleagues (2006) observed that newcomer proactivity acts as a partial mediator. Overall, self-efficacy has

been positively associated with socialization outcomes such as social integration, task mastery, person-job (PJ) fit, and PO fit; however, results are inconsistent when exploring the relationships between self-efficacy and role clarity, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and intentions to quit (Gruman et al., 2006; Saks & Ashforth, 2000).

Contextual/environmental cues. The second category of antecedents to newcomer proactivity found in the literature is contextual/environmental cues. Following a newcomer's entry, an organization may attempt to structure his or her environment and experiences to foster proactive behaviors so that he or she may facilitate their own socialization by locating resources not originally provided by the organization or interacting with social agents. Additionally, other contextual cues relating to social agents—such as relationship strength—may prompt newcomers to directly inquire for information, as strong relationships have been found to provide enhanced information sharing (Borgatti & Cross, 2003).

The most widely examined antecedent in this category is organizational tactics (Cooper-Thomas & Burke, 2012). In Griffin, Colella, and Goparaju's (2000) theoretical contribution, it is proposed that organizational tactics influence newcomer proactive behaviors in two ways: first, tactics provide a context in which proactive behaviors should occur; and secondly, the tactics utilized by organizations moderate the relationship between proactive behaviors and socialization outcomes. For example, an organization that uses less structured socialization tactics may force newcomers to behave more proactively, as newcomers must make sense of the new environment by themselves and the effectiveness of the proactive behaviors exhibited will greatly depend on the tactics being used.

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A number of empirical studies evaluating the effects of organizational tactics on proactive behavior provide a broad overview of this antecedent's potential effects on newcomer proactivity. Ashforth and colleagues (1997) found institutionalized tactics to be positively related to higher levels of proactive behavior in aggregate; specifically, institutionalized tactics have been positively associated with feedback seeking, socializing. Similarly, Kim and colleagues (2005) and Gruman and colleagues (2006) found a positive association between institutionalized tactics and feedback seeking and general socializing, job-change negotiation, and boss relationship building. Other researchers have investigated the effects of tactics on newcomer proactivity across Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) tactical dimensions with varying results. For instance, Miller (1996) and Saks and Ashforth (1997) found that the collective tactical dimension related to newcomers exhibiting more monitoring behaviors while Morrison, Chen, and Salgado (2004) found no such relationship. Saks and Ashforth's (1997) study also found a positive association between serial and investiture tactics and newcomer feedback seeking and monitoring, yet other research has yielded minimal results suggesting a relationship exists between serial and investiture tactics and proactive behaviors (Miller, 1996). Lastly, the effects of formal tactics on proactive behavior have also been explored, but no substantial relationship was found (Morrison et al., 2004). Overall, a positive correlation seems to exist between organizational tactics and newcomer proactivity (Cooper-Thomas & Burke, 2012), but more research is needed to explain the variance across tactical dimensions in relation to newcomer proactivity.

Organizational insiders, or social agents, are another environmental factor that may influence newcomer proactive behaviors. A great deal of research has been devoted

to exploring how insiders act as information sources to newcomers. In a landmark study, Louis and colleagues (1983) found that newcomers perceive peers, senior coworkers, and supervisors as the most helpful social agents during the adjustment process, and subsequent research has evaluated how newcomers utilize these different agents based on the type of information sought (e.g., Morrison, 1993b). Coworkers and supervisors are utilized almost equally when newcomers exhibit the proactive behaviors of monitoring and experimenting while seeking task and role information, but coworkers are preferred when seeking group information or technical information relating to newcomers' jobs (Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). In a study of new accountants, Morrison (1993b) examined newcomers' preferences regarding information sources (supervisors and coworkers) and two information seeking behaviors (monitoring and direct inquiry) newcomers may demonstrate; the results suggested that newcomers prefer to use direct inquiry of supervisors for task and performance information while using direct inquiry of coworkers for normative and social information. According to Cooper-Thomas and Burke (2012), newcomers possess an inherent preference to behave proactively toward supervisors when seeking role and performance information and toward coworkers for group, cultural, and social information, which indicates newcomers may behave strategically to maximize the benefits of obtaining information from different sources. Other factors that may affect newcomers' preference in selecting an information source include job autonomy and coworker trust (Parker, Williams, & Turner, 2006), social costs (Miller, 1996), and insider similarity (Kammeyer-Mueller, Livingston, & Liao, 2011).

Types of Proactive Behaviors

A number of studies attempting to categorize the types of newcomer proactive behaviors have emerged in recent years (e.g., Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker & Collins, 2010). The most prominent taxonomy of newcomer proactive behaviors, however, was proposed by Cooper-Thomas and colleagues (2011), as this categorization captures newcomers' behaviors directed toward positively changing their situations concerning all socialization actors—social agents, the organizations, and the newcomer. Cooper-Thomas and colleagues' (2011) taxonomy is comprised of three proactive behavior categories: change-role/environment, change-self, and mutual-development.

Change-role/environment. Behaviors in the change-role/environment category are aimed at changing work procedures in order for newcomers' skills and abilities to more effectively fit with the job, and in some cases, newcomers may attempt to completely redefine the role through job redesign or delegation (Feldman & Brett, 1983). This category also includes behaviors where newcomers may experiment or test limits in order to see if their preferred method is more effective than the standard (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). Alternatively, newcomers may also attempt to change their role or environment by persuading others to alter certain work factors (Kramer, 1993) and by offering advice to gain credibility and influence amongst coworkers (Cooper-Thomas & Wilson, 2011).

Change-self. The change-self category has garnered the most attention in the socialization literature as this category pertains to how newcomers attempt to change themselves to achieve better outcomes. Mostly, these behaviors involve locating and accessing information. Perhaps the most frequently explored behavior from this category

is direct inquiry, because the information acquired through this behavior reduces uncertainty and supplements other information provided by formal socialization practices (Miller & Jablin, 1991). Direct inquiry has been positively associated with a variety of desired socialization outcomes such as role clarity, job performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Bauer et al., 2007; Morrison, 1993b). When considering information needed to master socialization content, Van Der Velde, Ardts, and Jansen (2005) found direct inquiry aimed toward supervisors to be positively related to political and language learning dimensions, while inquiry directed toward coworkers was positively related to learning across performance, organizational history, organizational goals and values, and organizational politics dimensions. Collectively, research suggests that a "more is better" approach to direct inquiry yields greater benefit to newcomers (Ashford & Taylor, 1990; Louis, 1980; Miller & Jablin, 1991); however, the social costs (e.g., embarrassment, perceived incompetence, negative self-image) may moderate the frequency in which newcomers exhibit such behaviors (Borgatti & Cross, 2003; Cooper-Thomas & Burke, 2012). Similarly, other behaviors in the change-self category such as monitoring, role modeling, and listening are exhibited with the intent to acquire information, however, unlike direct inquiry, these behaviors are more passive and may be less effective than direct inquiry (Morrison, 1993b).

Mutual-development. The final category, mutual-development, encompasses behaviors that are useful for newcomers to establish and maintain relationships with social agents. Behaviors such as relationship building, role negotiation, and exchanging are essentially based on give and take relations to determine what newcomers can offer and the environment may afford (Cooper-Thomas & Burke, 2012) and have an

immediate, work-related focus. Similarly, networking behaviors are meant to assess how newcomers can contribute to the organization and how the organization can compensate newcomers for those contributions, but they have a long-term focus and the ultimate outcomes of networking behaviors may not be work-related (Ashford & Black, 1996). Much akin to networking, socializing behaviors are also long-term focused and are aimed at fostering relationships that will benefit both newcomers and social agents (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011). The primary difference between the two long-term focused behaviors is that networking is more directed at job-related purposes and socializing may be directed toward both social-related and job-related objectives. Collectively, newcomers utilize these behaviors to establish and build relationships with social agents; thus, allowing newcomers to easily acquire resources and information needed for adjustment.

Summary

Great strides have been made in newcomer proactivity research and considerably more is known regarding the antecedents and consequences of newcomer proactivity. Multiple constructs of proactivity, such as Bateman & Crant's (1993) proactive personality construct, have been offered as antecedents to outcomes such as career success, leadership, innovation, and successful socialization (Crant, 2000). Individual differences such as personality traits have also been found to affect newcomers' disposition toward behaving proactivity (Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000), in addition to varying contextual/environmental cues like organizational socialization tactics (Ashforth et al., 1997) and the differentiating influences of social agents (Morrison, 1993b). More recent research by Cooper-Thomas and colleagues (2011) has attempted to

categorize newcomer proactive behaviors based on the various goals of the behaviors being exhibited (i.e., change-role/environment, change-self, mutual-development). Despite the substantial research on newcomer proactivity, there is little understanding of what proactive behaviors facilitate strong relationships between newcomers and social agents in a social network context. This is surprising given the advances in the newcomer proactivity and social network literatures that have heavily focused on newcomers' behaviors exhibited toward social agents (e.g., Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011) and the antecedents to interpersonal networks (e.g., Brass, 2012), respectively. Overall, the newcomer proactivity research perspective is well developed and it is encouraging to see more studies focus on specific, newcomer proactive behaviors and the consequences of those behaviors.

Social Agents

Recall that the three actors in the socialization process are organizations, newcomers, and social agents; some scholars contend that social agents play the most critical role in successfully socializing newcomers (Reichers, 1987; Saks & Gruman, 2012). Social agents are individuals who help facilitate the adjustment of newcomers by providing information, feedback, role modeling, access to broader networks, and a sense of social validation (Klein & Heuser, 2008). Research suggests that newcomers' interactions with social agents are the most helpful socialization activities (Louis et al., 1983) and a number of different types of social agents have been identified in the literature including coworkers, supervisors, mentors, team members, insiders from other departments, and individuals outside of the organization (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007; Reichers, 1987). Of the various social agents found in the literature, coworkers and

supervisors have been the most frequently studied and are the most relevant social agents pertaining to this thesis; therefore, reviews of research pertaining to these social agents are provided in the following parts of this section. Mentors as social agents have been given a moderate amount of attention in the socialization literature (e.g., Chao, 1997; Chao et al., 1992) and are also reviewed.

Coworkers and Supervisors

As mentioned above, coworkers and supervisors are the most frequently examined social agents (Klein & Heuser, 2008) and have been found to differentially affect proximal and distal socialization outcomes. Bravo and colleagues (2003) found a negative relationship between newcomers' relationships with supervisors and role conflict, but observed a positive association between newcomers' relationships with coworkers and role conflict. Conversely, the results found by Bravo and colleagues (2003) suggested a positive association between newcomers' relations with supervisors and role ambiguity, but a negative correlation between relations with coworkers and role ambiguity. Findings from a study by Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) suggested that the influence of supervisors positively associated with political knowledge but not group integration, while coworker influence positively related to work group integration but negatively related to task mastery. Speaking to distal outcomes, Kammeyer-Mueller and Wanberg (2003) found supervisor influence to be significantly related to turnover and positively related to organizational commitment, and alternatively found coworker influence to be positively associated with commitment but not related to turnover. Klein and colleagues (2006) found newcomers' learning of organizational goals and values to mediate the relationship between social agent helpfulness and organizational commitment

and these findings are aligned with other research suggesting coworkers' and supervisors' influences to affect distal outcomes (Riordan, Weatherly, Vandenberg, & Self, 2001).

Newcomers' different relationship types with coworkers and supervisors (technical/informational or social/friendship) have been found to affect the type of information (technical, referent, normative, performance feedback, and social feedback) sought, in addition to the modes (monitoring or direct inquiry) used by newcomers (e.g., Morrison, 1993b). Chan and Schmitt (2000) observed that newcomers' information seeking behaviors directed toward supervisors remains constant over time when the information obtained is technical; however, newcomers information seeking behaviors decrease over time when targeting coworkers for technical information. Additionally, Chan and Schmitt (2000) found that newcomers' information seeking increases over time when acquiring referent information from supervisors, but remains constant when coworkers are the source. Further, Morrison's (1993b) findings suggested that newcomers prefer to seek technical and referent information as well as performance feedback from supervisors, but prefer to seek social feedback and normative information from coworkers. Studies examining the effects of newcomers' relationships with social agents on information seeking support the claim that interactions with social agents facilitate the socialization process (Louis et al., 1983), but refute the assertion that newcomers seek and acquire more information from coworkers (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992). It can be concluded that coworkers and supervisors are equally important information sources for newcomers to utilize during the socialization process.

Mentors

Mentors have been given less attention than coworkers and supervisors as social agents; therefore, there is a paucity of research on the topic although mentors have been linked to positive socialization outcomes (e.g., Allen et al., 1999). Recall from the review of the IWG framework—specifically, the guide-category activities—that mentors may not be available to all newcomers (Holton, 2001), however, employees who have been provided a mentor experienced higher levels of personal learning (Lankau & Scandura, 2002). Allen and colleagues (1999) found differences in the forms of mentoring, such that psychosocial mentoring positively related to newcomers' learning of organizational politics and performance dimensions of Chao and colleagues' (1994) learning content, while career-related mentoring was positively associated with newcomers' learning of the people dimension. Schrodt and colleagues (2003) observed that newcomers who were assigned mentors felt more connected to their work environment and a greater sense of ownership of their departments in addition to receiving more information about expectations and opportunities. The above-mentioned findings suggest a positive link between mentors and socialization outcomes, although more research is needed that examines formal and informal mentors as social agents, mentorships as onboarding practices, and mentors as antecedents to newcomer proactivity.

Summary

A general consensus exists in the literature that social agents are critical to the socialization of newcomers (Feldman, 1981; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Louis et al., 1983; Reichers, 1987) and previous research suggests social agents play different roles in the socialization process based on their relationships with newcomers

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(e.g., Chan & Schmitt, 2000). Furthermore, newcomers differentiate their information seeking behaviors directed toward social agents based on the type of information being sought (Morrison, 1993b; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992); thus it can be concluded that the exact role of social agents is complex. What is lacking regarding social agents, however, is a comprehensive model or framework outlining the specific behaviors or actions that social agents exhibit toward newcomers (Saks & Gruman, 2012) and how those actions impact proximal and distal outcomes. Additionally, more research examining the roles of mentors as well as other social agents (e.g., HR employees) during socialization is needed to better understand how social agents influence newcomer adjustment.

Social Networks

After newcomers enter organizations and become connected to social agents through interaction and reporting relationships, the forces of social networks begin to affect the socialization process. As noted earlier, organizations can strategically structure interaction between newcomers and social agents to create connections that foster successful socialization (Klein & Polin, 2012), or newcomers can proactively seek interaction opportunities to facilitate their own adjustment (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011). Nonetheless, successful socialization requires that newcomers locate resources within their social networks and exploit their ties with social agents to access those resources using information seeking modes (Morrison, 2002b). While it is quite clear that newcomers should leverage their social networks to obtain information and resources, certain network characteristics affect their ability to do so (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2012; Morrison, 2002b); thus, it is important to examine newcomers' social networks to understand how these networks may be better utilized to facilitate socialization.

Overview of Social Networks

The quantity of social network research in the field of management has drastically increased over the past three decades with a considerable amount of the research examining and reviewing the antecedents and consequences pertaining to networks in organizations (e.g., Balkundi & Kilduff, 2006; Carpenter et al., 2012; Kilduff & Brass, 2010). Scholars across disciplines have drawn on social network literature to address a variety of research questions due to its inherent, multi-level complexity. Social network analysis contributes to examining a range of organizational phenomena at macro and micro levels (Kilduff & Brass, 2010); therefore management subfields have developed their own scope of network research. Despite the variance in scope among those subfields, the collective literature defines a social network as a number of nodes, or actors, that are interconnected by ties, which represent specific relationships, interactions, or the absence of relationships or interactions (Brass, 2012; Brass, Galaskiewicz, Greve, & Tsai, 2004; Carpenter et al., 2012). On a micro level, for example, the actors in a given social network may represent employees within an organization and the relationship implied by the ties between employees may represent friendship. Oppositely, a macro level social network may include whole organizations as actors with ties representing product distribution agreements.

At either analysis level, a tie between two actors creates a dyad. Kilduff and Brass (2010) noted two key assumptions must be understood regarding dyads before examining whole networks. The first assumption is that each actor in a social network provides a set of indirect ties to other actors in the network; thus multiple dyads compose triads—the basic building blocks of whole networks. The focal actor(s) of study, also referred to as

the "ego," realizes the value of his or her social network as a result of the direct and indirect ties to other actors, known as "alters." Theoretically, the direct and indirect ties to alters create a state of interconnectedness between the ego and most or all of the alters; thus creating the "small world" experience (Travers & Milgram, 1969). This degree of interconnectedness becomes valuable to an ego when considering the second fundamental assumption of network theory, which states that flows (e.g., information, favors, influence, etc.) are transmitted from alters to an ego through those direct and indirect ties (Borgatti & Halgin, 2011; Brass, 2012). Scholars attribute a number of social network consequences to the flows between dyads (e.g., Borgatti & Cross, 2003; Carpenter et al., 2012; Cross & Cummings, 2004; Granovetter, 1973; Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001).

It is important to note that tie strength between actors affects the different flows transmitted between an ego and alters, and strong and weak ties have been found to provide egos with advantages and disadvantages in different contexts. Granovetter's (1973) seminal theory on tie strength postulated that weak ties are valuable because they may afford novel information, as weak ties are typically the result of infrequent contact. Using this logic in an innovation or job search context, weak ties are likely to provide non-redundant information such as emerging technological intelligence or knowledge of recent job openings. Substantial empirical research supports the utility of weak ties (Granovetter, 1983; Marsden & Hurlbert, 1988; Perry-Smith, 2006; Zhou, Shin, Brass, Choi, & Zhang, 2009), but weak ties are unlikely to provide an ego with interpersonal advantages, like social support. On the other hand, strong ties may be characterized by the following indicators: frequent contact, or the total amount of time two actors spend communicating or interacting; closeness, which is the amount of mutual confiding two

actors divulge to one another; and reciprocity, or the amount of services and favors exchanged between actors (Granovetter, 1973). Strong ties are likely to yield social support (Wellman & Frank, 2001) and consistent information sharing (Morrison, 2002b)—both of which have value in a socialization context, for example. Because strong ties are indicated by characteristics such as frequent contact, redundant information is likely to be transmitted between actors with strong ties (Granovetter, 1983); therefore strong ties may be less effective in an innovation or job search context compared to weak ties. Overall, tie strength is an important factor to consider when examining the outcomes of social networks, as the effects of strong and weak ties may vary.

As previously mentioned, social network research may be conducted at the micro and macro analysis levels. Given the scope of this thesis, the following parts of this section are structured to review the antecedents and consequences of social networks at the micro level of analysis, which are referred to as interpersonal networks. Previous social network research by Morrison (2002b) has suggested that interpersonal networks formed by newcomers after organizational entry have substantial effect on the socialization process, thus a review of interpersonal networks is necessary when examining newcomer adjustment from a social network perspective.

Antecedents to Interpersonal Networks

The formation of interpersonal networks is the result of various antecedents (Borgatti & Cross, 2003; Tichy & Fombrun, 1979) and each differentially influences that formation. The first group of antecedents pertains to individual actors' characteristics— such as their psychological dispositions (e.g., personality) and motivations (e.g., valuing

human capital)—as the means to which those actors interact and form relationships. The second group of antecedents encompasses external forces that facilitate connections (e.g., organizational structure) and are beyond the control of individuals. In a socialization context, connections between newcomers and social agents may be formed based on newcomers' proactive information seeking and relationship development behaviors, as well as their similarities or dissimilarities to social agents. Likewise, organizations may facilitate interactions and relationships by mandating that newcomers are to receive on-the-job training from their coworkers whose work is similar, thus constraining the number of social agents with whom newcomers may interact.

Individual actor characteristics. The first group of antecedents to interpersonal network development includes actors' similarities and personalities in addition to their motivations to pursue valuable human and social capital and maintain resource flows (Brass, 2012). A good deal of social network research suggests that similar actors tend to interact more frequently than those that are dissimilar (e.g., Brass, 1985a; McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001; Tichy, Tushman, & Fombrun, 1979)—also known as the theory of homophily. Empirical research suggests that the characteristics of connections between actors to be related to their degree of similarity (Brass, 1985a; Brass & Burkhardt, 1993; Gibbons & Olk, 2003; Ibarra, 1992; Ingram & Morris, 2007; Mehra, Kilduff, & Brass, 2001); thus more similar actors will experience higher frequencies of contact, reciprocate exchanges and social support, and have overall stronger ties to one another (McPherson et al., 2001). Alternatively, research examining actor personality as antecedent to interpersonal network development suggests that variances in personality (e.g., locus of control and neuroticism) connect egos to diverse clusters of alters (Kalish

& Robbins, 2006; Mehra et al., 2001; Oh & Kilduff, 2008). Most notably, these variances have been found to positively relate to network centrality (Klein, Lim, Saltz, & Mayer, 2004) —that is, an ego's number of direct ties to alters—therefore, personality variances potentially create numerous, direct channels for information flows.

Actors are also motivated to develop their interpersonal networks to obtain human and social capital and maintain reciprocal resource flows. Research that has applied social resources theory (SRT) to interpersonal networks indicates that individuals seek to interact and develop relationships with actors who possess more human capital (e.g., knowledge, skills, and abilities) with the goal of acquiring and benefitting from those assets (Brass, 2012; Lin, 1999). Comparably, actors are also motivated to interact with those who offer social capital (Casciaro & Lobo, 2008), such as social support, to mitigate feelings of uncertainty and anxiety. To maintain human and social capital flows, an ego must proactively work to reciprocate resources that an alter values to avoid emotional tension, information reallocation, and relationship deterioration (Krackhardt & Kilduff, 1999)—all of which may result in the termination of human and social capital flows.

External forces. Other antecedents impacting interpersonal network development include organizational culture and structure. Currently, there is a dearth of research examining how specific components of organizational culture affect ties between actors. Some research exists, however, that suggests national cultures moderate the relationship between organizational cultures and interpersonal network development. Monge and Eisenberg's (1987) findings suggest Japanese employees prefer strong relationships at work, while French employees prefer work relationships to be weak. Moreover, vertical

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differentiation has been found to positively relate to tie strength among Japanese employees (Lincoln, Hanada, & Olson, 1981). Given the lack of research on organizational culture and interpersonal networks, Brass (2012) noted that organizational culture could theoretically impact actors' perceptions concerning what types of behaviors (e.g., information seeking, socializing, networking) are deemed acceptable in addition to what pertinent knowledge is needed to succeed.

Relatedly, organizational structure positions actors at different points in a workflow, which may limit the number of opportunities that actors have to interact (Brass et al., 2004). Previous social network research has revealed differences in how mechanistic and organic structures impact communication (e.g., Shrader, Lincoln, & Hoffman, 1989). More informal communication channels tend to develop in organic organizations due to flexible interaction patterns at all hierarchical levels (Lincoln & Miller, 1979; Shrader et al., 1989; Tichy & Fombrun, 1979) and new or disruptive technologies may positively or negative impact those patterns (Burkhardt & Brass, 1990). Furthermore, variance in actor proximity—an outcome of structure—has been found to mediate the relationship between knowing what others know, valuing what others know, and timely access to that information (Borgatti & Cross, 2003). Provided that culture could dictate what information actors require to succeed (Brass, 2012), differences in structure may variably impact if and how actors access that information.

Outcomes of Interpersonal Networks

As the antecedents to interpersonal networks vary, the outcomes of also differ. Rather than review what interpersonal network outcomes follow the above-mentioned antecedents, the emphasis here is on the two groupings of outcomes traditionally

observed in the network literature. The first grouping includes how actors become alike, and a number of studies have identified several similarity outcomes (e.g., attitude similarity). The second grouping involves how actors develop dissimilarities (e.g., variances in individual job performance). The examination of interpersonal network outcomes is important as the outcomes can have substantial effects on organizations and individual actors. For example, networks that are conducive to actor socialization—as a result of information and resource flows—provide an organization with a highly skilled and knowledgeable workforce that can increase the organization's productivity (Chao et al., 1994). Negatively speaking, an interpersonal network that forces an ego to interact with undesirable or unhelpful alters could increase the ego's intentions to leave and decrease job performance (Labianca & Brass, 2006), thus negatively impacting the organization's turnover and productivity.

Actor similarities. Brass and colleagues (2004) noted that as an ego attempts to make sense of an environment, he or she compares and accordingly augments his or her psychological dispositions to match those of alters with whom they share structural equivalence—that is, the number of identical relationships with other network actors shared between an ego and an alter. Substantial research suggests that frequent interaction between actors increases the likelihood of attitude similarity (Burkhardt, 1994; Burt, 1987; Galaskiewicz & Burt, 1991; Ibarra, 1992; Kilduff, 1990; Pastor, Meindl, & Mayo, 2002; Umphress, Labianca, Brass, Kass, & Scholten, 2003; Walker, 1985). Likewise, actors situated in network clusters or groups have been found to report comparable levels of job satisfaction (Ibarra & Andrews, 1992; Roberts & O'Reilly, 1979) and affect (Barsade, 2002) as a result of their interactions and exchanges, and

actors with like network positions experience similar levels of power (Brass & Burkhardt, 1993). In a study examining employee turnover, Krackhardt and Porter (1986) found that actors with structural equivalence elected to leave the organization at approximate times. A final similarity outcome that has been given less empirical attention is socialization, although earlier research theorized that socialization might result from specific network characteristics (Eisenberg, Monge, & Miller, 1984; Sherman, Smith, & Mansfield, 1986). In a seminal study, Morrison (2002b) observed network size, density (how well connected the actors in a given network are to one another), and network range (the number of ties an ego has to alters in separate networks) to be positively related to organizational knowledge, task mastery, and role clarity—all of which facilitate successful socialization. While some debate may exist regarding how network actors become similar (e.g., Burkhardt, 1994; Umphress et al., 2003), the literature suggests that similarity outcomes are mostly positive and are likely to benefit individuals and organizations provided that actors do not have negative relationships (Labianca & Brass, 2006) or become subject to groupthink and extensive conformity as a result of multiple similarities.

Actor dissimilarities. While individuals do become more similar over time through frequent interaction, differences in network characteristics and among actors themselves can result in several dissimilarity outcomes. Job performance and other related dissimilarity outcomes have received significant attention from scholars (Brass, 2012). Research has found that actors who occupy central network positions experience higher levels of job performance due to having access to wider ranges of resources (Cross & Cummings, 2004; Mehra et al., 2001; Sparrowe, Liden, Wayne, & Kraimer, 2001), but

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other factors such as task complexity (Brass, 1981), technology (Brass, 1985b), tie strength (Perry-Smith, 2006), and organizational structure (Shrader et al., 1989) have been examined to moderate that relationship. Comparably, research suggests that interpersonal networks can produce variances in career success based on an ego's power within the network (Brass, 1984), the density of the network (Burt, 1992; Podolny & Baron, 1987; Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001), and the number of strong ties an ego shares with influential or powerful alters (Brass, 1984; 1985a; Kilduff & Krackhardt, 1994). Organizational citizenship behavior—a construct often associated with job performance and career success—has also been observed to vary based on network centrality (Settoon & Mossholder, 2002) and toward whom the behaviors are directed (Bowler & Brass, 2006). Although predominantly theoretical, scholars have postulated that network characteristics may differentially impact an actor's leadership effectiveness (Balkundi & Kilduff, 2005; Sparrowe & Liden, 1997), and an empirical study by Mehra, Dixon, Brass, and Robertson (2006) supported those notions as centrality related to a leader's group performance. Organizations are likely to seek minimal variance in these outcomes since collectively higher levels of job performance and career success, for example, would yield more benefit for all parties. However, dissimilarity outcomes can provide organizations with opportunities to identify and design practices (e.g., onboarding programs) that can enhance actors' interpersonal networks by situating them in close proximity to helpful individuals who can provide information and resources.

Summary

The drastic increase of social network research, specifically interpersonal networks, has allowed scholars to examine a number of organizational behavior

phenomena by studying how the interactions among network actors affect the behaviors of an ego. The literature suggests that various antecedents form interpersonal networks and the development of these networks may result in differentiating consequences or outcomes. As mentioned above, attitude similarities, personality, the pursuit of human and social capital, organizational structure, and organizational culture have all been found to differentially influence network development. While ample research has been conducted on some antecedents (e.g., homophily), others are in need of more attention (e.g., organizational culture). Nonetheless, the variance in findings among these antecedents is encouraging as it reveals that the social network literature is advancing toward a more complete understanding of how interpersonal networks develop and evolve. Interpersonal networks have been observed to produce two groupings of outcomes: the first grouping concerns how actors become similar in terms of attitude similarity, job satisfaction, affect, power, turnover, and socialization; the second grouping includes how actors become dissimilar regarding their job performance, career success, organizational citizenship, and leadership effectiveness. Much like research on the antecedents to interpersonal networks, scholars have more frequently examined some consequences (e.g., attitude similarity) compared to others (e.g., socialization); therefore future research should focus on examining the effects of networks on those underdeveloped outcomes. In conclusion, networks play a dynamic role in how individual actors behave, learn, and perform in their respective organizations.

The Social Network Approach to Socialization

The social network approach to socialization (SNAS) argues that newcomers primarily learn about their jobs and organizations through social relationships and

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interactions in the workplace (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2012), and the position of newcomers

within social networks affects their ability to access information and identify

opportunities. Reichers (1987) asserted that in order to understand how newcomers adjust

to new work environments, it is most important to focus on the informal interactions

between individuals as newcomers primarily learn about their jobs by working with

social agents (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979); thus, examining newcomers' social

networks in the workplace may be an effective means for advancing the understanding of

how social agents impact the socialization process (Morrison, 2002b). Jokisaari and

Nurmi (2012) noted that the socialization and network literatures have largely proceeded

without acknowledging the reciprocal exchange between the socialization process and

social networks and the SNAS addresses that exchange.

The SNAS boasts that individuals are socially embedded within their social

environment (Granovetter, 1983; Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2012), meaning interaction between

two individuals is usually dependent on their related networks. In a socialization context,

the adjustment of newcomers is contingent on (a) their location within the network

structure, which defines those available social agents for newcomers to utilize as

information sources, and (b) their strong or weak relations with those available social

agents (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2012). Therefore, social embeddedness can be divided into

two levels: structural and relational. Structural embeddedness encompasses

compositional characteristics of whole networks such as network centrality or network

density. On the other hand, relational embeddedness indicates the quality of relationships

between individuals and is most frequently characterized by tie strength, which denotes

the degree of intimacy between individuals (Granovetter, 1973). The following part of

this section offers a review of research pertaining to the role that social networks may have in socialization at both the structural and relational levels.

The Structural Roles of Networks in Socialization

Following organizational entry, newcomers' network structures lack connections to most social agents, as newcomers do not share relationships with those agents simply because no interaction has occurred between the two. SNAS research heavily draws on Burt's (1992) structural holes (SH) theory, which asserts that newcomers' missing ties to social agents create less dense, or sparse, networks and are advantageous to newcomers. The missing ties in newcomer networks create alleged holes and presumably place newcomers in brokerage positions (Burt, 1992); thus he or she connects different work or social groups to heterogeneous information since different groups of individuals possess different types of knowledge, opinions, and attitudes (Granovetter, 1973). Previous research on newcomers assuming brokerage positions in sparse networks suggests that newcomers can more easily access information and become more adjusted. As stated above, Morrison (2002b) studied the effects of newcomers' network structure on socialization outcomes and found that newcomers' network range was positively associated with role clarity and organizational knowledge. Interestingly, Morrison (2002b) also found that newcomers with larger networks (i.e., the number of actors in newcomers' networks) were more socially integrated than those with smaller networks. Sparse networks often include more weak ties than dense networks (Burt, 1992) and the number of weak ties in employees' networks has been linked to creativity (Perry-Smith, 2006; Zhou et al., 2009), career success (Podolny & Baron, 1997) and learning (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009). Further, research has shown that sparse networks positively influence

performance (e.g., Brass, 1981), but group or individual level factors (Sparrowe et al., 2001), formal organizational positions (Gargiulo, Ertug, & Galunic, 2009), and job characteristics (Brass, 1981) have all been found to moderate the effects of sparse networks on job performance. Collectively, this body of research supports the proposition that newcomers as brokers in sparse networks are likely to access essential resources and information more quickly, which is conducive to the socialization process.

Aside from Burt's (1992) SH theory and network density, SNAS research has also applied structural equivalence to understand newcomer sense making and adjustment. Burt (1987) posited that individuals are motivated to observe others who share the same network position because they are dependent on the same resources and relationships; therefore those individuals may be inclined to monitor one another to secure his or her own position and share of resources. Jokisaari and Nurmi (2012) noted that structural equivalence does not equate to a direct relationship between individuals, thus monitoring is the preferred method of information gathering (Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992) although monitoring is less effective than direct inquiry (Morrison, 1993b). Nonetheless, structurally equivalent actors may serve as valuable information resources to newcomers. Previous research suggests that employees who monitor their structural equivalents experience similar decision making choices (Kilduff, 1990), attitudes (Burt, 1987; Pollock, Whitbred, & Contractor, 2000), perceptions of justice (Umphress et al., 2003), and values (Gibbons, 2004). Given the substantial work supporting the strong influence of structurally equivalent network actors, it can be assumed that those social agents who share similar network positions with newcomers will be important information sources that are necessary to newcomers' adjustment and sense making.

The Relational Roles of Networks in Socialization

Reichers' (1987) interactionist perspective to socialization proposes that adjustment primarily arises through newcomers' interactions and relationships with social agents, and SNAS research centered on examining relational characteristics (i.e., tie strength) of newcomers' networks is based on that proposition. Relational characteristics play an important role in how newcomers access information and utilize social agents' knowledge and advice (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2012). This is evidenced by Bowler and Brass' (2006) findings, which suggested that employees in need of informal social support from colleagues may not usually receive it, at least until he or she is trusted (Feldman, 1976). Strong ties between newcomers and social agents are presumed to produce information exchanges (Krackhardt, 1992) because such ties are characterized by closeness, reciprocation, or trust (Granovetter, 1983). Research on relational level characteristics of networks supports the idea that strong ties enhance socialization as a result of strong ties being conducive to social support (Wellman & Frank, 2001) and knowledge sharing (Hansen, Mors, & Løvås, 2005). Morrison, (2002b) found newcomers' strong ties to be positively related to role clarity and task mastery while Jokisaari and Nurmi (2009) found strong ties to be related to job satisfaction. Moreover, other research suggests that an established history of interaction is likely to produce knowledge transfer (Hansen, 1999) and a sense of liking (Casciaro & Lobo, 2008) or inducements to ask for information and resources in the future (McDonald & Westphal, 2003). To reiterate, newcomers' interactions are of the most important socialization activities (Reichers, 1987); thus, social agents in newcomers' social networks have

significant impact on newcomer learning, and strong ties between those individuals may facilitate the socialization process.

Newcomers' uncertainty is most intense following organizational entry (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), and social agents may help reduce those negative experiences by helping newcomers make sense of the new environment (Reichers, 1987). Shah (1998) posited that individuals operating in an uncertain environment are more likely to rely on strong ties for information, and Denrell and Le Mens (2007) found mutual exploration of a new environment to be the primary means through which employees acquire knowledge and experience. The network literature claims that individuals' attitudes and opinions tend to be influenced by other network actors with whom they have strong ties (Brass, 2012), and it has been asserted that strong ties result in increased interaction between individuals (Granovetter, 1983), which has been theorized to enhance resource sharing— a positive outcome of newcomers exhibiting information seeking behaviors. Strong ties between newcomers and social agents not only result in greater information and resource sharing, but also a mutual understanding, formed by similar attitudes and opinions, that aids in reducing uncertainty and ambiguity in the new environment.

Summary

Social networks impact socialization at the structural and relational levels, and each differentially influences newcomer adjustment. Speaking first to the structural level, newcomers' networks upon entry are sparse due to the number of weak ties and overall lack of connections to insiders (Burt, 1992), thus allowing newcomers to broker heterogeneous information between different social and work groups. Newcomers who are positioned as brokers have been found to experience higher levels of creativity (Zhou

et al., 2009), career success (Podolny & Baron, 1997), and learning (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009). Secondly, social agents sharing structural equivalence with newcomers have been found to alter newcomers' attitudes (Pollock et al., 2000), decision-making choices (Kilduff, 1990), justice perceptions (Umphress et al., 2003), and values (Gibbons, 2004). At the relational level, SNAS argues that strong ties are critical to the socialization of newcomers, as those ties are more likely to produce information exchanges (Krackhardt, 1992). During socialization, strong ties have been positively linked to aspects of newcomer learning such as role clarity, task mastery (Morrison, 2002b), and job satisfaction (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009). Research also suggests that strong ties enhance newcomers' sense making (Shah, 1998) through mutual exploration (Denrell & Le Mens, 2007) and similar social outlooks (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2012), both of which reduce newcomers' uncertainty by making the new environment more predictable.

Chapter 3: Hypothesizing the Effects of Strong Ties on Socialization

The aim of this study is to explore antecedents to strong tie development between newcomers and social agents in addition to investigating how those strong ties impact socialization outcomes through information seeking. Toward this aim, specific IWG activities and proactive mutual development behaviors are proposed as antecedents to strong tie indicators, with social agent helpfulness and proactive personality acting as moderators. Moreover, the relationships between the strong tie indicators and newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry are subsequently examined to determine how socialization outcomes are affected. Before these relationships can be examined, a relative timeframe regarding newcomers' tenure for inclusion in the study must be established, the types of social agents to be included in the study must be specified, and relationship building IWG activities must be differentiated from other onboarding practices.

Clarification of Relative Timeframe

The relative timeframe used to include participants in this study is a six-month period beginning at newcomers' sixth month with their organizations until the twelfth month. A consistent finding in socialization research is that changes in newcomer behavior show a primacy effect (Ashforth & Saks, 1996; Bauer & Green, 1994; Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002; Major, Kozlowski, Chao, & Gardner, 1995). Previous research has observed significant changes in newcomer behavior between one and six months, which could be a function of newcomers' efforts to quickly reduce uncertainty (Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). This research further

emphasizes the primacy effect by providing evidence that changes in newcomers' behavior patterns become less apparent over time (Ashford & Saks, 1996); in other words, newcomers become comfortable in exhibiting certain behaviors once they have concluded that those behaviors are acceptable and necessary to their socialization. Overall, temporal considerations of socialization have largely been absent (Klein & Heuser, 2008) with the exception of Ashforth and colleagues' (2007) study identifying key temporal issues. Klein and Heuser (2008, p. 314) use a "just in time" approach for determining optimal times for when newcomers should learn socialization content dimensions; each dimension is "critical to know" during the second and third months with the exception of organizational history and politics.

The social network literature provides a practical starting point for establishing a relative timeframe. No research could be found that has examined tie strength in a temporal context, but a substantial body of research exists investigating factors (e.g., frequency of contact) that can independently designate strong ties and the consequences (e.g., information sharing) of those ties (Brass, 1984; Granovetter, 1973; 1983; Krackhardt, 1992; Nelson, 1989; Venkataramani, Giuseppe, & Grosser, 2013). This literature does suggest, however, that strong ties develop over the long-term opposed to the short-term, and the time taken for strong ties to develop varies widely amongst dyads as a result of individual differences. For example, a newcomer and social agent need time to develop a schedule of regular contact and find opportunities to not only develop their work relationships but also social relationships. Moreover, individual differences (e.g., personality traits) can moderate how likely two individuals are to regularly engage in two-way dialogue and the quality of the conversations. A newcomer who is an introvert

and an extroverted social agent, for example, may find initial difficulty in communicating about personal matters. Considering what is known about tie development between individuals, it is reasonable to assume that newcomers will need a practical amount of time to build strong ties with social agents.

Keeping in mind both literatures, the aforementioned six-month timeframe is used for theoretical and practical purposes to capture significant correlations between variables. Organizational entry stimulates high levels of uncertainty that newcomers will seek to swiftly reduce by utilizing practices deployed by the organization (e.g., IWG activities) and exhibiting proactive behaviors to become socially integrated, and seek information from social agents. It is ideal to examine the effects of those organizational practices and proactive behaviors on tie strength between newcomers and social agents when needed most by newcomers. Likewise, newcomer information seeking behaviors are more probable to show greater impact on socialization outcomes during the initial stages of socialization because newcomers require more information to make sense of the new environment. Thus, the effects on socialization outcomes can be better evaluated by observing information seeking early in the process. Contrary to the socialization literature, research on social networks emphasizes a long-term focus when studying a dyad's tie strength. This approach is to allow newcomers ample time to have frequent contact with social agents and afford them opportunities to develop their relationships through social interaction. To account for both the short-term and long-term focuses needed to study socialization and tie strength respectively, this study will only include participants whose tenures with their current organizations is between six and twelve months.

Clarification of Social Agents

Social agents include all organizational insiders that can impact the socialization of newcomers, but this study will only include coworkers and supervisors—the two most frequently studied social agents in the socialization literature (Klein & Heuser, 2008). This study follows that trend in an attempt to further understand how newcomers' relationships with these social agents affect information seeking. While studies have found differences in the information supervisors and coworkers provide to newcomers in relation to socialization outcomes (Bravo et al., 2003; Chan & Schmitt, 2000; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 1993b; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992), it is not the aim of this study to examine such differences, but rather to investigate the tie strength between newcomers and social agents and how it affects the frequency in which newcomers ask coworkers and supervisors for information. Because supervisors and coworkers have close structural proximity to newcomers and have been found to provide profuse amounts of information to newcomers (Major et al., 1995), the inclusion of these social agents is logical. Future research should address variances in tie strength between newcomers and supervisors and coworkers to determine how strong and weak ties affect newcomers' preferences for information sources and modes based on the type of information sought.

Jokisaari and Nurmi (2012) posited that differences in structural and relational embeddedness regulate with whom newcomers interact, how often interaction occurs, and how likely individuals are to exchange resources, therefore it can be implied that newcomers' relationships with social agents across functions, hierarchical levels, and organizational boundaries will take longer to yield benefit and this temporal lag will not

coincide with the above-mentioned timeframe. Furthermore, Jokisaari and Nurmi (2012) and Morrison (2002b) pointed to the newcomers' interpersonal networks, which include those social agents with whom newcomers have formal relationships, as the most influential group of social agents due to similarities in structural and relational embeddedness. Coworkers and supervisors are the only social agents included to account for the complex timeframe involving when socialization should be observed and how soon the benefits of their relationships with newcomers can be understood; relationships between newcomers and other social agents are beyond the scope of this study.

Clarification of Relationship Building IWG Activities

The definition of *relationship building IWG (RBIWG) activities* is those onboarding practices that arrange social interaction specifically between newcomers and social agents. These activities are differentiated because each provides newcomers the opportunities to interact and become affiliated with their coworkers and supervisors. Other IWG activities are concerned with providing newcomers resources that are to be used individually (e.g., completing an online training program, watching a new employee video, or being given a glossary of abbreviations or "buzzwords" used throughout the organization) and do not require newcomers to interact with social agents so that strong ties can be developed. RBIWG activities are provided by organizations to facilitate strong tie development through structured interact so that newcomers can more easily locate and access the information needed to adjust.

Specific IWG activities were extracted from Klein and Polin's (2012) list and then limited to those activities that facilitate social interaction between newcomers and the aforementioned social agents. Relationship building activities are drawn from all three

categories (inform, welcome, and guide) in Klein and Heuser's (2008) framework, and

because this study uses a limited scope of social agents, the RBIWG activities that

provide opportunities for newcomers to interact with social agents are listed in Table 1.

Table 3: List of RBIWG Activities

IWG Category	Activity
Inform	My supervisor set aside a block of uninterrupted time to spend with me
	I received on-the-job training on how to perform my job
	I attended an orientation program with other new hires
	I attended sessions where presentations were given by fellow associates who were expert on certain tasks or procedures
Welcome	I participated in an exercise to get to know my fellow associates
	There was a gathering for me to meet my fellow associates
	I was invited to participate in a social event to get to know my fellow associates
Guide	A fellow associate was assigned as my "buddy" to help answer any questions I might have

Source: Klein, H. J., & Polin, B. (2012). Are organizations on board with best practices onboarding?. In C. Wanberg (Ed.), *The Oxford handbook of organizational socialization* (pp. 267-287). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Hypothesizing Antecedents to Strong Tie Indicators

A total of five hypotheses will be identified regarding the antecedents to strong

ties in a socialization context. The first hypothesis concerns the impact of RBIWG

activities on tie strength between newcomers and social agents. It is worth mentioning

that tie strength has been evaluated by a variety of single measures (e.g., Lin, Ensel, &

Vaughn, 1981; Nelson, 1989; Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001) because indicators may

operate somewhat independently (Granovetter, 1973) and each can be individually representative of strong ties. This study, however, will examine the following tie strength indicators: frequency of contact, closeness, and reciprocity, and then subsequently examine the independent effects of those indicators on newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry.

RBIWG Activities

The RBIWG activities adopted from Klein and Heuser's (2008) IWG framework are a variety of practices that organizations could utilize to facilitate newcomer adjustment through interaction with social agents. The SNAS suggests that newcomers learn about their jobs and organizations through relationships and interactions with social agents to whom they are formally connected (Reichers, 1987). RBIWG activities afford newcomers multiple opportunities to regularly participate in planned social interaction activities with a variety of social agents. While strong ties are characterized by frequent contact (Granovetter, 1973), a higher total of offered RBIWG activities will foster strong tie development. Additionally, prior research suggests that socially rich onboarding practices facilitate newcomers' learning of work and social relationships (e.g., Wesson & Gogus, 2005), and newcomers who perceive these onboarding practices as beneficial will establish patterns of frequent contact with social agents.

> *Hypothesis 1: (a) The higher number of RBIWG activities*
> *offered, either formally or informally, will positively relate*
> *to the frequency of contact factor needed for strong tie*
> *development; (b) the more beneficial the RBIWG activities*

offered, either formally or informally, will positively relate

to tie strength indicated by frequency of contact.

The Moderating Role of Social Agent Helpfulness

Whether or not newcomers view social agents as helpful while engaging in RBIWG activities will moderate the relationship between RBIWG activities and the frequency of contact indicator. More to this point, if a newcomer perceives a social agent as helpful while experiencing the RBIWG activities, the more likely he or she is to contact that social agent in the future (Louis et al., 1983). Conversely, should a newcomer find an agent to be unhelpful, their communication may diminish or cease. In this context, social agent helpfulness is defined as the degree to which newcomers find the information provided by social agents to be useful, which is considered to be information that is immediately applicable to newcomers' jobs.

Those social agents that are perceived helpful by newcomers may be likely to be contacted in the future because of their credibility as an information source. Recall that during organizational entry, newcomers' uncertainty is most intense due to discrepancies in expectation and reality (Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979); therefore social agents may be interpreted as helpful or unhelpful depending on their effectiveness in providing information and ultimately alleviating that uncertainty. Louis and colleagues (1983) examined the perceived helpfulness of social agents as antecedents to socialization outcomes and found the two to be positively related. Comparably, Klein and colleagues (2006) observed the perceived helpfulness of social agents as a prerequisite to newcomers' mastery of socialization content dimensions. Given these previous findings regarding agent helpfulness and its effects on the socialization process, helpful social

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agents are likely to become a frequent point of contact for newcomers and the inverse

will be likely for a social agent that is perceived as unhelpful.

> *Hypothesis 2: Social agent helpfulness will interact with*
>
> *the felt benefit of RBIWG activities to impact the frequency*
>
> *of contact factor such that greater social agent helpfulness*
>
> *will yield stronger ties indicated by frequency of contact*
>
> *and lower perceived social agent helpfulness will yield*
>
> *weaker ties indicated by frequency of contact.*

Mutual-Development Behaviors

The next set of hypotheses concerns proactive newcomer behaviors and strong

ties between newcomers and social agents. According to Granovetter (1973), strong ties

are not only a function of frequent contact, but also reciprocity and closeness.

Newcomers can strengthen ties with social agents by engaging in certain proactive

behaviors that benefit both individuals. Recall that Cooper-Thomas and colleagues

(2011) proposed a wide range of proactive behaviors divided into three categories, and

the present study adopts five of the eight behaviors included in mutual-development

category as these behaviors aim to strengthen ties with social agents. The proactive

mutual-development behaviors included in this study are teaming, befriending,

exchanging, flattering, and socializing. These behaviors are viewed as having an additive

effect on tie strength, rather than a multiplicative effect, since one behavior can still

impact newcomers' relationships with social agents if others are not demonstrated.

The negotiation, talking, and networking behaviors that Cooper-Thomas and

colleagues' (2011) included in the mutual-development category are excluded from the

present study. Negotiation in this context only refers to altering a newcomer's role (Ashford & Black, 1996; Cooper-Thomas & Burke, 2012; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011; Gruman et al., 2006) rather than their relationships with social agents; thus it is excluded. The talking behavior is excluded due to its indirect nature regarding relationship development (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011). Talking is enacted towards all organizational insiders in the attempt to find information in passing without the notion of developing relationships. This study focuses on direct proactive behaviors that strengthen ties between newcomers and social agents and will omit the talking behavior. Similarly, networking is not directed at strengthening relationships with social agents, but rather making new contacts to expand one's network to have multiple resources; hence the networking behavior is also excluded.

Befriending and teaming behaviors attempt to influence how social agents view newcomers (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011) thereby making it logical that newcomers exert effort towards building strong relationships with social agents. During teaming, newcomers are showing commitment to team activities to earn the respect and trust of teammates. Earlier research by Feldman (1976) found that coworkers did not relinquish essential information needed for newcomers' adjustment until the newcomers were found to be trustworthy. This finding illustrates the importance of newcomers developing positive relationships with social agents and how the teaming behavior is an approach to do so. Befriending has a much broader scope of social relationship building compared to teaming, as it is unrestricted and comprises all social agents. It should be noted that befriending is an opposite behavior of Beyer and Hannah's (2002) avoiding behavior, which indicates that befriending cultivates relationships with social agents. Befriending is

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a behavior that directly aims to develop strong ties of the closeness variety. Both teaming and befriending have positive links to social support (Kramer, 1993; Nelson & Quick, 1991)—a consequence of strong ties (Wellman & Frank, 2001)—and are considered to be antecedents to the closeness indicator of strong ties.

> *Hypothesis 3: The frequency of befriending behaviors will*
>
> *positively relate to tie strength indicated by closeness.*
>
> *Hypothesis 4: The frequency of teaming behaviors will*
>
> *positively relate to tie strength indicated by closeness.*

Exchanging and flattering are proactive behaviors that demonstrate newcomers are aware of potential sources of power (French & Raven, 1959), and exchanging behaviors may be exhibited through reciprocated favors and obligations when newcomers find value in building relationships with social agents. The exchanging behavior involves newcomers trading resources such as industry contacts, expertise, or experience to social agents in turn for useful resources that facilitate socialization (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011). Exchanging may be particularly useful in the instance that a newcomer identifies an ideal information source and wishes to continue utilizing that source by offering resources in return. Social network research suggests that when individuals make exchanges, the tie becomes stronger (Granovetter, 1983; Krackhardt, 1992), and when individuals value others' resources, they will seek to acquire those resources under the condition that the exchange can be reciprocated and does not entail significant costs to maintain the relationship (Borgatti & Cross, 2003).

Flattering is used to further ensure that social agents view newcomers positively. Generally, people tend to find those who flatter them as favorable (Vonk, 2002), and

unsurprisingly, flattery that is directed at one individual rather than a group of individuals results in a more favorable impression from whom is being ingratiated (Gordon, 1996). Newcomers use flattery as a tactic to actively control the perceptions of social agents regarding their relationships (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2011), and by remaining in social agents' positive perceptions, newcomers are more likely to receive favors and other rewards (Buunk, Doosje, Jans, & Hopstaken, 1993). Newcomers use flattering in conjunction with exchanging to maintain reciprocal resource flows through positive dispositions so that favors, obligations, resources, and rewards continue to be exchanged, thereby strengthening the ties between newcomers and social agents. Exchanging and flattering are considered to be antecedents to the reciprocity indicator of strong ties.

> *Hypothesis 5: The frequency of exchanging behaviors will*
>
> *positively relate to tie strength indicated by reciprocity.*
>
> *Hypothesis 6: The frequency of flattering behaviors will*
>
> *positively relate to tie strength indicated by reciprocity.*

Socializing is similar to befriending, as it is also the opposite of Beyer and Hannah's (2002) avoidance behavior, as newcomers are actively developing relationships with social agents. In previous research, social interaction has been positively linked to socialization outcomes (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996; Morrison, 2002b; Reichers, 1987). Socializing creates the opportunity for newcomers to not only have healthy working relationships with social agents, but also discretionary social relationships, which foster a sense of acceptance, belonging, integration, and identity (Klein & Heuser, 2008). Newcomers who exhibit this behavior are strengthening ties with social agents twofold. First and most obvious, socializing increases the frequency in which newcomers and

social agents interact. Secondly, socializing aids in the process of learning the personal qualities about social agents to form closeness. Considering these outcomes, the socializing behavior is conducive to the frequency of contact and closeness indicators of strong ties.

> *Hypothesis 7: The frequency of socializing behaviors will*
>
> *positively relate to (a) tie strength indicated by frequency*
>
> *of contact and (b) tie strength indicated by closeness.*

The Moderating Role of Proactive Personality

Newcomers who possess proactive personalities will be more likely to exhibit the above-mentioned behaviors when compared to newcomers who have passive personalities. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Crant (2000) defined proactive behavior as "taking initiative in improving current circumstances or creating new ones," and explained that "it involves challenging the status quo rather than passively adapting to present conditions" (p. 436). Conversely, the environment shapes passive individuals, since they prefer to react and adapt to change rather than inciting the change (Bateman & Crant, 1993). The prototypic proactive personality construct proposed by Bateman and Crant (1993) is centered on the premise that individuals with proactive personalities "scan for opportunities, show initiative, take action, and persevere until they reach closure by bringing about change" (p. 105). With this construct in mind, it is unsurprising that proactive personalities have profound effects on a number of employee outcomes such as job performance (Crant, 1995), career outcomes (Seibert et al., 1999), job satisfaction, and organizational commitment (Thomas et al., 2010). Collectively, these outcomes have all been linked to socialization in some capacity (e.g., Bauer et al., 2007;

Miller & Jablin, 1992; Morrison, 1993b). This research suggests that newcomers who possess proactive personalities are more likely to exhibit the behaviors required to facilitate the socialization process. In this context, newcomers with proactive personalities are more likely to display the mutual-development behaviors needed to foster strong ties with social agents.

Following Bateman and Crant's (1993) prototypic proactive personality construct, newcomers with proactive personalities will be more confident and comfortable when utilizing the above-mentioned mutual development behaviors. Befriending and teaming behaviors require that newcomers actively build relationships with social agents and display commitment to team activities, which are more natural behaviors for newcomers with proactive personalities, as they will more easily demonstrate the initiative and actions needed to earn the respect and trust of social agents. Similar to befriending and teaming, socializing is a rather natural behavior to newcomers with proactive personalities because they interpret interactions and conversations with social agents as opportunities to positively change the original state of their relationships. Moreover, newcomers with proactive personalities will also recognize the exchanging and flattering behaviors as chances to provide favors to social agents and shape a positive image so that newcomers are viewed as deserving of reciprocated favors. Newcomers who possess proactive personalities view the mutual development behaviors more as opportunities to positively change their current relationships with social agents rather than social burdens or extra work; therefore, these newcomers are more likely to exhibit those behaviors to strengthen ties with social agents.

Oppositely, newcomers with passive personalities will be less confident and comfortable in demonstrating mutual-development behaviors. Because individuals with passive personalities are reactive, the befriending, teaming, exchanging, flattering, and socializing behaviors may only be displayed when the newcomer believes it is necessary for maintaining one's job. Befriending, teaming, flattering, and socializing may then be viewed as social burdens that newcomers must endure to preserve the current state of relationships with social agents and are less probable to be exhibited in the future. Newcomers with passive personalities may also observe exchanging as extra work unless mandated by job description and neglect chances to earn future reciprocated favors that can aid in the socialization process. Hence, passive newcomers are not as likely to exhibit the aforementioned behaviors that facilitate strong tie development.

> *Hypothesis 8: Newcomers' level of proactive personality*
> *will interact with (a) befriending, (b) teaming, (c)*
> *exchanging, (d) flattering, and (e) socializing toward*
> *strong tie indicators such that higher levels of proactive*
> *personality will yield greater levels of tie strength indicated*
> *by frequency of contact, closeness, and reciprocity, while*
> *lower levels of proactivity will yield lesser levels of tie*
> *strength indicated by frequency of contact, closeness, and*
> *reciprocity.*

Strong Tie Indicators and Frequency of Direct Inquiry

As a relational characteristic of a newcomer's network, tie strength plays an important role in how newcomers can access information (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2012) and

is critical to newcomers. Strong ties have been found to be instrumental in information sharing that facilitates socialization (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009; Morrison, 2002b). The underlying reason for these findings might be that strong ties are likely to provide support (Wellman & Frank, 2001) and offer tacit knowledge (Hansen et al., 2005) so newcomers can reduce their uncertainty and develop a sense of social acceptance. Past research has also suggested that an ego with a strong tie to an alter is more likely to ask that alter for advice and information (Casciaro & Lobo, 2008; McDonald & Westphal, 2003), which is indicative of tie strength mediating the relationship between the information sought and the success of acquiring that information.

What is less clear is how tie strength influences the modes newcomers utilize to acquire information, and this study attempts to establish a relationship between tie strength and an information seeking mode. Two information seeking modes—monitoring and inquiry—were examined by Morrison (1993b) to understand variances in newcomers' preferences for when and with whom to engage in using either mode and if the frequency of these modes related to socialization outcomes. Excluding monitoring, this study will build on Morrison's (1993b) work by examining how tie strength between newcomers and social agents relates to the frequency with which newcomers use direct inquiry. Monitoring is excluded because of its impersonal nature where newcomers interpret observations from their own perspective (Ashford & Cummings, 1983) and do not interact with social agents. Due to this study being primarily concerned with the ties between newcomers and social agents and their interactions rather than newcomers' preferences for using information seeking behaviors, the exclusion of monitoring makes sense.

Direct inquiry requires a newcomer to not only seek information through asking various questions, but to also endure costs as it involves newcomers explicitly asking social agents for information. The main cost of inquiry is potential damage to a newcomer's image, as asking a question may make the newcomer appear to be insecure or incompetent (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). Borgatti and Cross (2003) stated that indebtedness is a cost of information exchange such as asking questions, and a high degree of indebtedness would cause newcomers to fail at reciprocating exchanges; thus newcomers experiencing psychological discomfort or the relationship becoming strained. These costs dictate newcomers' use of direct inquiry and can inhibit them from accessing needed information, but strong ties may mitigate these costs.

Frequent contact between newcomers and social agents will positively relate to inquiry as a result of increased two-way dialogue and more opportunities for newcomers to ask social agents for information. Because newcomers need multiple types of information to become adjusted (Bauer et al., 2007), more opportunities to acquire those types of information will be beneficial during the socialization process. High frequencies of contact with social agents also enhance newcomers' understanding of social agents therefore allowing newcomers to feel comfortable asking acceptable questions of social agents and realize what invasive questions to avoid asking. Furthermore, frequent contact familiarizes newcomers with social agents' different knowledge levels and expertise so that newcomers can easily locate and inquire for information from the most appropriate source. Increasing the frequency of contact between newcomers and social agents will generate more opportunities for information seeking and may improve newcomers' overall understanding and familiarity with social agents—all of which minimize the costs

of using inquiry as an information seeking behavior. Thus, higher frequencies of contact will lead to increases in newcomers' use of direct inquiry.

> *Hypothesis 9: Tie strength indicated by frequency of*
>
> *contact will positively relate to the frequency in which*
>
> *newcomers use direct inquiry as an information seeking*
>
> *mode.*

It is proposed here that the closeness between newcomers and social agents can reduce newcomers' reluctance to engage in direct inquiry because of the available social support, comfort in asking questions, and familiarity with social agents associated with strong ties indicated by closeness. A close tie between a newcomer and a social agent is likely to yield support for both individuals (Wellman & Frank, 2001) and includes cohesive information sharing (Denrell & Le Mens, 2007) due to the developed relationship. Close ties are also likely provide newcomers with a sense of security when asking social agents questions relating to their new job, relationships, and other organizational information. The attributes of strong ties indicated by closeness mitigate those costs and positively affect newcomers' frequency of exhibiting direct inquiry.

> *Hypothesis 10: Tie strength indicated by closeness will*
>
> *positively relate to the frequency in which newcomers use*
>
> *direct inquiry as an information seeking mode.*

Reciprocity will also facilitate newcomers' use of direct inquiry as a result of the psychological comfort developed in exchanging resources with social agents. When reciprocal ties exist between newcomers and social agents, it is understood that as one network actor asks for a favor, resources, or information, the other actor can expect

similar requests. As social agents call on newcomers to provide deliverables, newcomers can cognitively process that inquiring for information during socialization is acceptable. After recognizing reciprocity, newcomers may experience less uncertainty and psychological discomfort since the costs of direct inquiry have been diminished due to gains in trust and assurance that exchanges are not only reciprocal, but also continuous. Strong ties indicated by reciprocity will enhance newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry.

> *Hypothesis 11: Tie strength indicated by reciprocity will*
>
> *positively relate to the frequency in which newcomers use*
>
> *direct inquiry as an information seeking mode.*

Frequency of Direct Inquiry and Socialization Outcomes

To advance the exchange between the socialization and social network literatures, it is important to examine the relationship of direct inquiry between the strong tie indicators and socialization outcomes. Prior research has determined information seeking to be valuable during the socialization process, and using a "more is better" approach is beneficial for facilitating adjustment (Ashford, 1986; Ashford & Taylor, 1990; Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 1993b); furthermore, direct inquiry has been identified as the most effective information seeking mode (Ashford, 1986; Morrison, 1993b). These findings suggest that newcomers who frequently use direct inquiry to gather information are likely to become successfully socialized. Morrison's (1993b) study included job satisfaction, performance, and organizational commitment as determinants of successful socialization and found a positive relationship between newcomers' frequencies of direct inquiry and those socialization outcomes. Similar to Morrison (1993b), the following are hypothesized as positive outcomes of newcomers demonstrating higher frequencies of

direct inquiry: job satisfaction, or the extent to which newcomers experience satisfaction due to lower levels of uncertainty; job performance, which is how often newcomers exhibit the appropriate behaviors pertaining to their jobs, as well as the appropriate organizational citizenship behaviors; and organizational commitment, or the extent that newcomers wish to remain with their current organizations.

> *Hypothesis 12: Newcomers' frequencies of direct inquiry*
>
> *will be positively related to (a) job satisfaction, (b) job*
>
> *performance, and (c) organizational commitment.*

Summary

The twelve hypotheses propose a number of relationships and are summarized in Table 2. No research to date has integrated onboarding practices and newcomer proactive behaviors as antecedents to strong tie development with social agents. Moreover, research that has studied socialization in a social network context (e.g., Morrison, 2002b) did not consider the mediating role of information seeking between relational embeddedness (i.e., tie strength) and socialization outcomes, and these hypotheses seek to fill those voids.

Table 4: Summary of Hypotheses

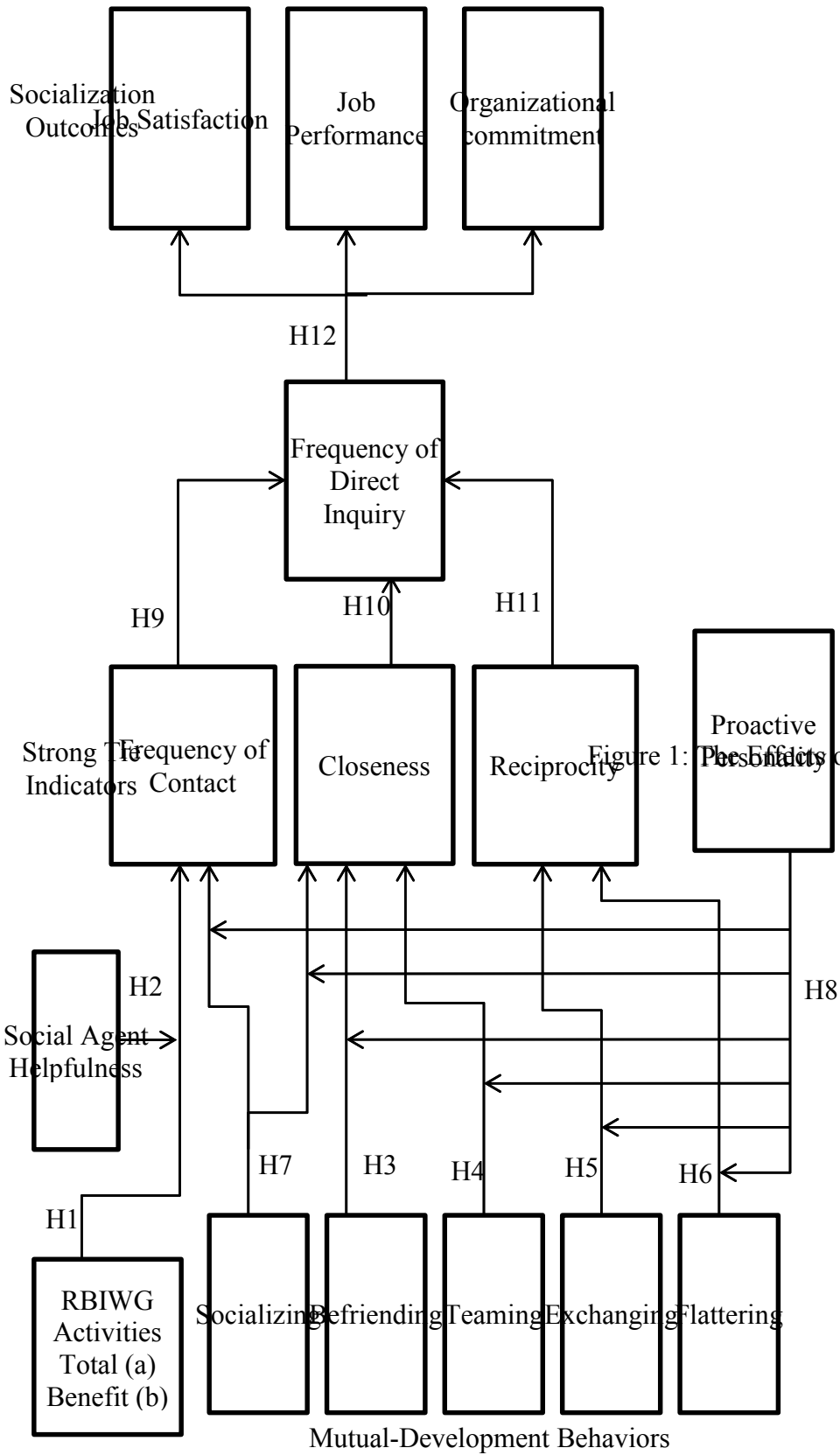| Number	Hypothesis
1	(a) The higher number of RBIWG activities offered, either formally or informally, will positively relate to the frequency of contact factor needed for strong tie development; (b) the more beneficial the RBIWG activities offered, either formally or informally, will positively relate to the frequency of contact factor needed for strong tie development.
2	Social agent helpfulness will interact with the felt benefit of RBIWG activities to impact the frequency of contact factor such that greater social agent helpfulness will yield stronger ties characterized by frequency of contact and lower perceived social agent helpfulness will yield weaker ties characterized by frequency of contact.
3	The frequency of befriending behaviors will positively relate to tie strength indicated by closeness.
4	The frequency of teaming behaviors will positively relate to tie strength indicated by closeness.
5	The frequency of exchanging behaviors will positively relate to tie strength indicated by reciprocity factor.
6	The frequency of flattering behaviors will positively relate to tie strength indicated by reciprocity.
7	The frequency of socializing behaviors will positively relate (a) tie strength indicated by the frequency of contact factor and (b) tie strength indicated by closeness.
8	Newcomers' level of proactive personality will interact with (a) befriending, (b) teaming, (c) exchanging, (d) flattering, and (e) socializing toward strong tie indicators such that higher levels of proactive personality will yield greater levels of tie strength indicated by frequency of contact, closeness, and reciprocity, while lower levels of proactivity will yield lesser levels of tie strength indicated by frequency of contact, closeness, and reciprocity.

(continued)

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Table 4: (continued)

Number	Hypothesis
9	Tie strength indicated by frequency of contact will positively relate to the frequency in which newcomers use direct inquiry as an information seeking behavior.
10	Tie strength indicated by closeness will positively relate to the frequency in which newcomers use direct inquiry as an information seeking behavior.
11	Tie strength indicated by reciprocity will positively relate to the frequency in which newcomers use direct inquiry as an information seeking behavior.
12	Newcomers' frequencies of direct inquiry will be positively related to (a) job satisfaction, (b) job performance, and (c) organizational commitment.

Chapter 4: Method

Data was collected to first test how RBIWG activities and mutual-development behaviors enhance tie strength between newcomers and social agents, and then to subsequently test how strong ties impact newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry to determine how socialization outcomes are affected. Through the support of the above-mentioned hypotheses, it is hoped that this study will provide a functional model that exemplifies the effects of newcomers' ties with social agents on the socialization process, as displayed in Figure 1. Moreover, new theoretical antecedents of strong ties are presented in this model as well as mediators and moderators of the relationships between those antecedents and socialization outcomes.

Sample

The focus of this study is on tie strength between newcomers and social agents, hence the target sample for this study was full-time employees at four organizations headquartered in the Southeastern United States. These companies represented the manufacturing, accounting, real estate, and engineering/construction industries. These organizations also had offices located across the United States, and employees from those offices were also eligible to participate in the study allowing for multiple organizations to be represented. A total of 452 employees were invited to participate in the study, and 206 chose to participate. Fifty-two of these cases were removed from the data set due to extensive missing data, resulting in usable sample of 154 employees, yielding a 34% response rate. Of those employees that chose to participate, 51.3% were male, and the

Figure 1: The Effects of Strong Ties on Socialization

sample had a mean age of 33.1 years. Provided that only employees with an organizational tenure between six and twelve months were eligible to participate in the study, the mean tenure of participating employees was 8.7 months.

Procedure

HR managers were initially contacted via email and asked for their voluntary support by including their employees in this research study, and supplementary phone conversations were held to further explain the significance and potential benefits of the study. Upon granting permission, the HR managers were provided with a preview of the survey for their review and understanding. Next, HR managers compiled lists of those employees with a current organizational tenure between six and twelve months in order to identify those eligible employees. The primary investigator then provided HR managers with the online link to distribute to their respective employees via email. Each participant had at least one week to complete the survey and HR managers were instructed by the primary investigator to send reminder emails to participants around one week after the survey was made available. A copy of the survey is located in Appendix A.

Once the URL link was opened, participants were taken to a consent page, which stated that their participation was voluntary and that they must be at least 18 years of age, and have a tenure between six and twelve months at their current organizations. Once participants completed the survey, all identifiable information pertaining to individual participants, as well as their coworkers, was deleted. All information was stored on a secure server to which only the primary investigator had access.

All participants received the same version of the survey, which included questions pertaining to tie strength indicators, mutual development proactive behaviors, level of proactivity, information seeking, job performance, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, onboarding practices, social agent helpfulness, and demographics. The total number of questions answered varied by participant, as listing an additional coworker added eight questions—one question for each of the three strong tie indicators and one for each of the five mutual-development behaviors. If a participant listed only their supervisor and a single coworker, he or she answered 69 questions about the following variables: the total RBIWG activities offered by the organization and the benefit of each; the extent of helpfulness concerning social agents while experiencing RBIWG activities; mutual-development behaviors exhibited toward the social agents listed; proactive personality; their frequency of contact, degree of closeness, and degree of reciprocity with the social agents listed; how frequently he or she directly inquires about job-related information; socialization outcomes including job satisfaction, job performance, and organizational commitment; and demographics. Because the number of questions concerning strong tie indicators and mutual-development behaviors varied, the mean number of questions that participants answered regarding these variables was 20.4. The median time spent by participants taking the survey was 13.1 minutes.

Measures

Several separate multi-item scales were adapted from previous research in measuring how the proposed antecedents may facilitate strong ties, as well as the impact of those ties on socialization outcomes. In this section, all measures presented in the survey are explained. Those measures that applied to both participants and social agents

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were presented first; measures that only applied to participants were presented second; and measures that applied to participants and their respective organizations were presented third. Demographic questions were presented last.

Measures Applying to Newcomers and Social Agents

Previous research on tie strength has typically included a single measure of tie strength (e.g., Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001); but due to the diverse proactive behaviors newcomers may exhibit to develop relationships and the varying, potential outcomes of each (e.g., socializing is likely to lead to a high frequency of contact and high degree of closeness, but unlikely to lead to a high degree of reciprocity), it was important to examine tie strength indicators separately rather than as a composite. Granovetter (1973) suggested that frequency of contact, closeness, and reciprocity between two individuals are indicative of strong ties, but acknowledged that each indicator may function somewhat independently. In a study by Marsden and Campbell (1984), it was found that strong tie indicators are not unitary and certain indicators were more suggestive of strong ties based on the given circumstances. Therefore each tie strength indicator was individually analyzed. Comparably, Perry-Smith (2006) found too low of reliabilities amongst tie strength indicators to warrant combining and used separate measures for analysis. The present study also evaluated tie strength by separate measures in order to account for the differences in mutual-development behavior outcomes.

When collecting tie strength data, researchers typically follow a two-stage approach (Hansen, 1999; Perry-Smith, 2006; Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001). The first stage involves collecting the relevant contacts in participants' networks to create points of

reference, and the second stage involves obtaining the necessary tie strength

measurements. This study adapted the two-stage approach for measuring tie strength

between newcomers and social agents first by asking participants to list the first name of

his or her supervisor and then to rate the respective tie strength measurements.

Participants were next asked to separately list the names of coworkers that they believed

to be relative to their job and then rate the respective tie strength measurements. A limit

of 30 entries was set on the number of names a participant could list to avoid bias, but not

all participants provided 30 names. If participants had been limited to only listing three

coworkers, for example, he or she may have listed those three coworkers to whom they

only have strong ties. The items requesting the first names of participants' supervisors

and coworkers and the tie strength measurements were presented first to create points of

reference for subsequent items in which those names would be needed (i.e., mutual-

development behaviors).

Frequency of contact. This study used Perry-Smith's (2006) single-item measure

to assess tie strength indicated by frequency of contact between participants and their

supervisors and coworkers. Each participant was asked to indicate how often he or she

communicates with each contact on average using a 6-point Likert scale ranging from

less often (1) to *daily* (6). Tie strength indicated by frequency of contact was calculated

by averaging the reported frequency of contact rating for each social agent listed.

Closeness. Closeness was examined using Perry-Smith's (2006) single-item

measure. Participants were asked to specify how close he or she is to each contact they

may have listed using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *acquaintance* (1) to *very close*

friend (5). Tie strength indicated by closeness was calculated by averaging the reported closeness rating for each social agent listed.

Reciprocity. To measure tie strength indicated by reciprocity, the present study used Buunk and colleagues' (1993) single-item measure. Participants were asked to choose the statement that best characterizes their relationships with their supervisor using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *I am providing much more help and support to my supervisor than I receive in return* (1) to *My supervisor is providing much more help and support to me than I provide in return* (5). Identical statements were presented to participants when asked to consider their relationships with coworkers. Tie strength indicated by reciprocity was calculated by averaging the reported reciprocity rating for each social agent listed.

Mutual-development behaviors. Similar to the strong tie indicators, proactive behaviors were measured by instructing participants to indicate each proactive behavior that he or she has exhibited towards their supervisor and each coworker listed. For each proactive behavior, a nominal measure was formed by calculating the total number of behaviors demonstrated toward all of the social agents that he or she listed.

Social agent helpfulness. The social agent helpfulness measure was adapted from Louis and colleagues (1983), which included a multitude of socialization tactics/resources (e.g., formal onsite orientation, supervisors, peers, business trips) that are beyond the scope of this study. Klein and colleagues (2006) also adapted this measure for examining social agent helpfulness and excluded Louis and colleagues' (1983) items that did not pertain to social agents (original α=.68). Likewise, this study will exclude items that do not include social agents. Louis and colleagues' (1983) and Klein and

colleagues' (2006) respective scales, however, included multiple types of social agents. Unlike prior research exploring social agent helpfulness, this study only examines newcomers' relationships with supervisors and coworkers; thus the degrees of helpfulness concerning those social agents are evaluated, while the helpfulness of other social agents (e.g., senior coworkers, mentors, secretaries) is excluded.

The adapted social agent helpfulness measure was a two-item measure and comprised of a dichotomous and a Likert scale question. Participants first indicated if the two types of social agents (supervisors and coworkers) were available to assist in learning important information regarding their new roles by answering *yes* or *no*. For each available social agent, participants then rated the extent to which that social agent assisted them in learning important information using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *not helpful* (1) to *extremely helpful* (5). The responses for both items were averaged together to create the Social Agent Helpfulness Composite and the coefficient α in the present study is .75.

Measures Only Applying to Newcomers

The following scales only pertained to participants' behaviors at work, attitudes toward their jobs, and their job performance. For all of these respective measures, the responses provided by participants were averaged to form composite variables.

Proactive personality. Proactive personality was measured using Bateman and Crant's (1993) proactive personality scale. This measure was a 17-item scale (original α=.89) in which respondents answered questions about a variety of proactive behaviors using 7-point Likert scales ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7). The

responses to each item were averaged to form the Proactive Personality Composite and the coefficient α in this study was .70.

Frequency of direct inquiry. The frequency of direct inquiry measure was adapted from Ashford's (1986) 3-item scale that was primarily used to examine individuals' propensity to inquire about their own job performance in addition to asking supervisors about potential career advancement opportunities. Morrison (1993b) also adapted this scale for measuring newcomers' tendencies to engage in information seeking behaviors based on information type, but used a different response scale based on objective units of time. In contrast to Ashford (1986) and Morrison (1993b), the types of information sought by newcomers are beyond the scope of this study; however, by adapting two of Ashford's (1986) items (excluding the item regarding potential career advancement opportunities) to encompass all general, job-related information while using Morrison's (1993b) response scale to gather information about the actual frequency of inquiry, a holistic and more accurate scale of newcomers' frequencies of direct inquiry was developed.

The resulting measure was a single-item measure for separately assessing newcomers' frequency of inquiry with supervisors and coworkers. Participants were asked to indicate how often they asked their supervisors for job-related information using Morrison's (1993b) 7-point Likert scale ranging from *never* (1) to *a few times a day* (7). This was then followed with an identical item to measure how often newcomers asked their coworkers for job-related information. Participants' responses to each item were averaged to create the Frequency of Direct Inquiry Composite.

Job performance. Three components of job performance were measured by

adapting scales developed by Williams and Anderson (1991): in-role behaviors (IRB; 7

items, original α=.91); organizational citizenship behaviors with emphasis on an

individual (OCBI; 7 items, original α=.88); and organizational citizenship behaviors with

emphasis on the organization (OCBO; 7 items, original α=.75). Researchers typically use

dyadic pairs when collecting data on employees' job performance by collecting data from

their respective supervisors (Bauer & Green, 1994; Morrison, 1993b; Williams &

Anderson, 1991) and matching the appropriate employee data with that of their

supervisor. Quite differently, the present study altered the scales developed by Williams

and Anderson (1991) to a self-report format. While self-reported measures regarding job

performance presented disadvantages, this method allowed participants to provide first-

hand accounts of their own performance—this was valuable when considering

participants also self-reported how often they asked supervisors and coworkers for job-

related information. This method could have revealed discrepancies in how participants

viewed their negative job performance in relation to their low frequency of direct inquiry;

therefore emphasizing the theoretical need for newcomers to more frequently ask

supervisors and coworkers for job-related information to increase self-efficacy and

improve job performance.

After revising Williams & Anderson's (1991) scales into a self-report format, the

three components were still measured using separate 7-item scales, and the responses to

each item on the separate scales were averaged to create respective composites.

Participants answered questions using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *never* (1) to

always (5). The coefficient α in the present study for the IRB Composite, OCBI

Composite, and OCBO Composite were .75, .64, and .58 respectively.

Job satisfaction. Job Satisfaction was measured using Cammann and colleagues'

(1983) three item scale (original α=.77). Participants answered questions using a 7-point

Likert scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (7), and the responses to

each item were averaged to form the Job Satisfaction Composite. In the present study, the

coefficient α for the Job Satisfaction Composite was .63.

Organizational commitment. Organizational Commitment was measured using

Klein, Molloy, Cooper, and Swanson's (2011) uni-dimensional, self-report measure of

organizational commitment. This was a 4-item scale (original α=.95) that required

participants to answer questions using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *not at all* (1) to

extremely (5), and the responses to each of the four items were averaged to form the

Organizational Commitment Composite. The coefficient α in the present study was .87.

Measures Applying to Newcomers and Respective Organizations

Participants were provided with the above-mentioned list of RBIWG activities

and asked to evaluate each using two of Klein and colleagues' (2015) scales. First,

participants were instructed to denote *if* each of the RBIWG activities occurred by

indicating if the activity was *formal*, *informal*, or *did not occur*. To be consistent with the

original measure, if the practice was required, preplanned, or appeared to have occurred

for each newcomer, participants were instructed to select *formal*. If the practice was

voluntary or was unplanned, participants were instructed to select *informal*. If

participants were unsure or some elements of both *formal* and *informal* applied, they

were instructed to select *formal*. The total number of RBIWG activities was calculated based on those practices that participants indicated as formal or informal.

Secondly, for each activity that participants reported experiencing, they were asked one additional question. Participants were asked to indicate how helpful the activity was in facilitating their adjustment to their new role by using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *not at all beneficial* (1) to *extremely beneficial* (5). The responses to the additional questions were averaged to form the RBIWG Activities Benefit Composite (α=.81).

Analytical Approach

The main statistical analysis used in this study was linear regression, as only one independent variable and one dependent variable were measured in each hypothesis. Hypotheses 2 and 8 included moderator variables; therefore moderation analysis was also conducted. No control variables were present in this study, as there was no theoretical support for controlling for participant age, tenure, gender or other variables that are often controlled. However, a boundary condition (newcomer tenure of six to twelve months) was included.

Chapter 5: Results

Means, standard deviations, and intercorreltations among all variables are presented in Table 3. As previously mentioned, linear regression was the main analysis used to statistically test the hypotheses, as well as moderation analysis when appropriate. Following a discussion of each hypothesis, a brief statement indicating the level of support is provided.

Hypothesis 1a proposed that the number of RBIWG Activities offered by organizations, either formally or informally, would positively relate to strong ties indicated by frequency of contact. This was tested by regressing the total number of offered RBIWG activities on the average tie strength indicated by frequency of contact, which produced non-significant results. ($p>.05$). Hypothesis 1b postulated that the more beneficial the offered RBIWG activities were to newcomers—formally or informally— would positively influence the frequency of contact indicator. To test Hypothesis 1b, the RBIWG Activities Benefit Composite was regressed on the average tie strength relating to frequency of contact, which yielded results suggesting a statistically significant relationship ($\alpha=.81$; $p<.01$) but a negative correlation ($r=-.27$). Overall, Hypothesis 1 is not supported.

Hypothesis 2 stated that the extent to which social agents were perceived as helpful by newcomers would moderate the relationship between newcomers' perceived benefit of RBIWG activities and the frequency of contact with social agents. To test this hypothesis, the interaction between the independent variable and moderator variable was

Table 5: Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations Among Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Tie Strength (Frequency)	5.30	0.62										
2. Tie Strength (Closeness)	3.70	0.62	.10									
3. Tie Strength (Reciprocity)	3.26	0.56	.00	-.02								
4. Socializing (Total)	2.60	2.26	-.07	.02	.07							
5. Befriending (Total)	3.35	3.04	.01	-.09	.06	.73**						
6. Teaming (Total)	3.53	2.93	-.06	-.16	.04	.69**	.88**					
7. Exchanging (Total)	3.10	2.91	-.01	-.03	-.00	.74**	.91**	.84**				
8. Flattering (Total)	1.99	2.82	-.08	-.09	.03	.67**	.81**	.75**	.85**			
9. Proactivity Composite	5.49	0.48	-.12	.03	.11	.34**	.20*	.20*	.21*	.20*		
10. Freq. of Direct Inquiry Composite	5.95	0.99	.37**	.18*	.05	.08	.02	-.11	.05	.01	.23**	
11. Job Performance (IRB)	4.48	0.39	.13	-.12	.01	.02	.20*	.21*	.20*	.10	.37**	.24**
12. Job Performance (OCBI)	3.80	0.51	.16*	-.05	.10	.01	.05	.10	.06	.05	.28**	.14
13. Job Performance (OCBO)	4.33	0.43	.39**	-.17*	.05	-.04	0.41	.04	.02	-.01	.32**	.43**
14. Satisfaction Composite	6.03	0.82	.16*	.06	.09	.07	.15	.09	.17*	.13	.40**	.25**
15. Commitment Composite	4.26	0.64	-.05	.05	.17*	.18*	.16*	.20*	.15	.17*	.32**	.12
16. RBIWG Activities (Total)	7.20	1.31	.02	.37**	.06	.01	-.10	-.16*	-.00	-.02	-.07	.11
17. RBIWG Benefit Composite	2.70	0.99	-.27**	-.09	-.03	-.09	-.18*	-.13	-.19*	-.12	-.07	-.28**
18. SA Helpfulness Composite	2.26	1.28	-.37**	.11	-.01	-.04	-.08	-.07	-.08	.01	-.11	-.15

Table 5: (continued)

Variable	Mean	SD	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
11. Job Performance (IRB)	4.48	0.39								
12. Job Performance (OCBI)	3.80	0.51	.50**							
13. Job Performance (OCBO)	4.33	0.43	.69**	.55**						
14. Satisfaction Composite	6.03	0.82	.54**	.41**	.47**					
15. Commitment Composite	4.26	0.64	.39**	.57**	.38**	.47**				
16. RBIWG Activities (Total)	7.20	1.31	-.24**	.07	-.18*	.00	.26**			
17. RBIWG Benefit Composite	2.70	0.99	-.44**	.03	-.33**	-.30**	.24**	.29**		
18. SA Helpfulness Composite	2.26	1.28	-.25**	-.00	-.23**	-.34**	.19*	.34**	.59**	

Notes: SA=Social Agent; average number of ties used for correlations in variables 1-8 is 5.10; n=154.
*p<.05; **p<.01

examined through regression analysis; thus regressing the RBIWG Activities Benefit

Composite on the average tie strength indicated by frequency of contact, with the Social

Agent Helpfulness Composite acting as a moderator. The results from the moderation

analysis support the Social Agent Helpfulness Composite acting as a moderator

($\Delta R^2=.16$, p=.05), and the results are displayed in Table 4. Hypothesis 2 is supported.

Table 6: Moderation of Social Agent Helpfulness on the Benefit of RBIWG Activities and Frequency of Contact

Independent Variables	Dependent Variable	ΔR^2	β	p
Benefit of RBIWG Activities; Social Agent Helpfulness	Frequency of Contact	.16	.10	.05

Hypothesis 3 offered that a frequency of befriending behaviors exhibited by

newcomers would positively influence tie strength indicated by closeness. Using

regression, the total number of befriending behaviors was regressed on the average tie

strength indicated by closeness. The results were non-significant (p>.05), thus Hypothesis

3 is not supported.

Hypothesis 4 posited that the frequency of teaming behaviors demonstrated by

newcomers would positively relate to tie strength indicated by closeness. The total

number of teaming behaviors was regressed on the average tie strength regarding

closeness, which yielded significant results suggesting that the relationship exists (p=.05).

However, the correlation between these two variables is negative (r=-.16). Hypothesis 4

is not supported.

Hypothesis 5 proposed that the frequency of exchanging behaviors exhibited by

newcomers would positively relate to tie strength indicated by reciprocity. The frequency

of exchanging behaviors was regressed on the tie strength average relating to the reciprocity factor. The regression analysis produced non-significant results (p>.05). Hypothesis 5 is not supported.

Hypothesis 6 stated that the frequency of flattering behaviors demonstrated by newcomers would positively influence tie strength indicated by reciprocity. After regressing the frequency of flattering behaviors on the average tie strength regarding reciprocity, the results were non-significant (p>.05). Hypothesis 6 is not supported.

Hypothesis 7 conceived that the frequency of socializing behaviors would positively relate to (a) tie strength indicated by frequency of contact and (b) tie strength indicated by closeness. The frequency of socializing behaviors was first regressed on the tie strength average relating to frequency of contact, yielding non-significant results (p>.05). Next, the frequency of socializing behaviors was regressed on the average tie strength indicated by closeness, which also produced non-significant results (p>.05). Hypothesis 7 is not supported.

Hypothesis 8 postulated that proactive personality would moderate the following relationships: (a) the frequency of befriending behaviors and tie strength indicated by closeness; (b) the frequency of teaming behaviors and tie strength indicated by closeness; (c) the frequency of exchanging behaviors and tie strength indicated by reciprocity; (d) the frequency of flattering behaviors and tie strength indicated by reciprocity; and (e) the frequency of socializing behaviors and tie strength indicated by frequency of contact and closeness. To test this hypothesis, the independent variables and moderator variable were examined through regression analysis; in other words, the frequency of each behavior was regressed on the respective tie strength averages with the Proactive Personality

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Composite (α=.70) operating as a moderator. The moderation analysis yielded non-significant results (p>.05) for parts, a, b, c, d, and e of this hypothesis. Hypothesis 8 is not supported.

Hypothesis 9 offered that the frequency of contact factor would positively relate to newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry. To test this hypothesis, the average tie strength indicated by the frequency of contact was regressed on the Frequency of Direct Inquiry Composite. The results indicate that the frequency of contact factor has a statistically significant and positive relationship with the Frequency of Direct Inquiry Composite (ΔR^2=.14; p<.01). Hypothesis 9 is supported and the results are summarized in Table 5.

Hypothesis 10 stated that the closeness indicator would positively influence the newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry. The average tie strength indicated by closeness was regressed on the Frequency of Direct Inquiry Composite to test this hypothesis. The results support the hypothesized relationship between the two variables (ΔR^2=.03; p<.05). Hypothesis 10 is supported and results are summarized in Table 5.

Table 7: Results of Regressing Frequency of Contact and Closeness on Frequency of Direct Inquiry

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	ΔR^2	β	p
Frequency of Contact	Frequency of DI	.14	.24	.00
Closeness	Frequency of DI	.03	.11	.02

Note: DI=Direct Inquiry

Hypothesis 11 posited that the reciprocity indicator would positively relate to the newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry. To test this hypothesis, the average tie strength indicated by reciprocity was regressed on the Frequency of Direct Inquiry Composite. The regression analysis produced non-significant results (p>.05). Hypothesis 11 is not supported.

Hypothesis 12 proposed that newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry would positively influence (a) job satisfaction, (b) job performance, and (c) organizational commitment. This hypothesis was tested by first regressing the Frequency of Direct Inquiry Composite on the Job Satisfaction Composite (α=.63; p>.05). Next, the Frequency of Direct Inquiry Composite was regressed on the three components of job performance: IRB Composite (α=.75; p>.05); OCBI Composite (α=.64; p>.05); and OCBO Composite (α=.58; ΔR^2=.08; p<.01). The results of the regression analysis including the Frequency of Direct Inquiry Composite and the OCBO Composite are displayed in Table 6. Finally, the Frequency of Direct Inquiry Composite was regressed on the Organizational Commitment Composite (α=.87; p>.05). The regression analyses suggest a significant, positive relationship only exists between the Frequency of Inquiry Composite and the OCBO Composite. Beyond that finding, the regression analyses mostly yielded non-significant results. Overall, Hypothesis 12 is weakly supported.

Table 8: Results of Regressing Frequency of Direct Inquiry on OCBO

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	ΔR^2	β	p
Frequency of DI	OCBO	.08	.64	.00

Note: DI=Direct Inquiry

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Chapter 6: Discussion

The aim of this study was to continue building on the small body of research that has previously investigated the exchange between socialization and social networks through the accomplishment of two objectives: (a) explore antecedents to strong tie development between newcomers and social agents, and (b) examine how strong ties influence socialization outcomes through information seeking. Hypotheses 1-8 attempted to address the first objective, while Hypotheses 9-12 were directed at addressing the second. Below is a discussion of the findings regarding all hypotheses.

Findings Regarding Antecedents to Strong Ties

The first eight hypotheses focused on understanding antecedents to tie strength between newcomers and social agents, as well as moderators interacting with those antecedents and strong ties. The antecedents represented onboarding practices used by organizations to connect newcomers with their peers as well as proactive behaviors used by newcomers to build strong relationships. This study is unique, as it examines onboarding practices as an antecedent to network development, particularly tie strength development, which is a critical step forward in advancing the SNAS. Prior work supports proactive behavior as an antecedent to network development (Morrison, 2002b); however, this study differs from previous research as it attempts to link specific mutual-development behaviors to strong tie indicators rather than exploring how proactive behavior may result in a larger network.

Findings Regarding RBIWG Activities

  The first and second hypotheses focused on RBIWG activities as an antecedent to strong ties indicated by frequency of contact and the moderating effects of social agent helpfulness, respectively. Regarding Hypothesis 1a and 1b, the non-significant findings are surprising, provided that previous research suggests that formal socialization tactics facilitate socialization (e.g., Bauer et al., 2007), and the IWG framework offers specific onboarding practices to assist newcomers in learning socialization content (Klein & Heuser, 2008; Klein & Polin, 2012). The RBIWG activities were drawn from all three categories in the IWG framework, and according to Klein and Heuser (2008), each of these categories relates to the learning outcomes—intellectual skills, verbal information, and cognitive strategies—which ultimately may result in the learning of the work relationships and social relationships. Furthermore, Klein and colleagues (2015) found partial support for a positive relationship between newcomers who experience more formal onboarding activities and the extent to which those newcomers are socialized; additionally, newcomers were found to perceive onboarding practices as more beneficial when formally offered. Klein and colleagues' (2015) findings are congruent with previous research suggesting a positive relationship between institutionalized socialization tactics and successful socialization, yet the results of Hypothesis 1a and 1b are not supportive of that relationship. The non-significant findings of Hypothesis 1a are especially surprising given that this study also measured the total number of formal onboarding practices offered to newcomers as done by Klein and colleagues (2015).

  It is worth noting that the findings from Hypothesis 1b were statistically significant, yet a negative correlation was found between the benefit of RBIWG activities

and participants' frequency of contact with social agents (r=-.27; p<.01). Prior studies examining the effects of onboarding programs have supported a positive association between those practices and newcomers' learning of social agents (Klein & Weaver, 2000), especially when the orientation program is "socially rich" (Klein & Heuser, 2008, p. 287)—meaning, the program focuses on the content dimension of people, for example. Moreover, Wesson and Gogus (2005) observed newcomers who participated in a social-based orientation session developed a deeper understanding of the people dimension when compared to newcomers who participated in a computer-based orientation. Because RBIWG activities are aimed at enhancing social and work relationships between newcomers and social agents, the more effective these activities are at facilitating positive or constructive interaction between newcomers and social agents, newcomers would presumably seek further interaction—at least with those agents they interpret as helpful. A possible explanation for the negative relationship might be that the RBIWG activities experienced by the overall sample failed to collectively facilitate constructive interactions due to being forced. Labianca and Brass (2006) postulated that forced interaction between individuals that are considerably different might result in diminished or complete cessation in communication among other negative outcomes.

There are a few ways that this analysis can be improved. First, a larger sample size may provide the statistical power needed to achieve significant results for Hypothesis 1a and 1b. When evaluating the relationship between the number of onboarding activities offered and the extent to which newcomers are socialized, Klein and colleagues' (2015) study included ten organizations yielding a sample size of 373, which is notably larger than that of the present study (n=154). While this study did not explore the direct effects

of formal onboarding activities on socialization outcomes as done by other researchers

(e.g., Klein et al., 2015; Wesson & Gogus, 2005), a larger sample size may have captured

the effects of the RBIWG activities on the frequency of contact indicator. Secondly, the

analysis may be improved if a different sample was used. Because different organizations

are likely to deploy a range of formal onboarding activities to socialize their newcomers

(Klein & Polin, 2012), it is probable that the newcomers participating in the present study

did not experience the same number of RBIWG activities. When examining the effects of

formal onboarding activities on socialization in the future, researchers may find it

beneficial to only include organizations with relatively similar onboarding programs.

The findings of Hypothesis 2 support previous research on the helpfulness of

social agents. Some of the earliest socialization research suggested that newcomers'

interactions with social agents were critical to the socialization process (e.g., Louis et al.,

1983). Klein and colleagues (2006) found social agent helpfulness to be positively

associated with the mastery of various content dimensions, which emphasizes the

importance of positive interactions between newcomers and social agents. Alternatively,

social network research has suggested that required interaction between individuals has

the potential to result in negative consequences (Labianca & Brass, 2006), such as

unconstructive arguing and diminished information flows. Therefore, as hypothesized,

the extent to which an agent is helpful to a newcomer did moderate the relationship

between newcomers' benefit of experiencing RBIWG activities and the frequency of

contact newcomers had with social agents. The results of Hypothesis 2 are encouraging

as they provide evidence that social agent helpfulness is not only an important antecedent

to socialization outcomes (Louis et al., 1983) and newcomer learning (Klein et al., 2006),

but also interpersonal network development.

Findings Regarding Mutual-Development Behaviors

Turning toward mutual-development behaviors as an antecedent to strong ties and

the moderating effects of proactive personality, the social network literature suggests that

individuals who attempt to maximize mutual benefits between themselves and others are

likely to develop strong ties (Brass, 2012). The non-significant findings of Hypotheses 3-

7 are surprising, provided that previous research has shown proactive behaviors to

positively impact network development (Crant, 2000). Ashford and Black (1996)

identified mutual development behaviors (i.e., socializing, networking, and building

relationships with supervisors) that newcomers demonstrate to build relationships with

social agents and found that increased interaction between newcomers positively related

to job performance. Similar to Ashford and Black (1996), this study attempts to identify

proactive behaviors that increase interactions between newcomers and social agents. The

present study is different, however, than that of Ashford and Black's (1996) since it

includes more than three mutual-development behaviors; the behaviors require

newcomers to develop relationships with social agents, and the behaviors are focused on

immediate mutual gain. Despite these differences, research on newcomer proactivity

supports a positive relationship between the frequency of proactive behaviors exhibited

and a variety of outcomes, including relationship development (Cooper-Thomas &

Burke, 2012). Additionally, network theory supports that claim because strong ties may

be costly to maintain due to the effort needed to remain close to another actor

(Granovetter, 1983). By that logic, the more proactive behaviors that newcomers exhibit

toward social agents would result in strong ties, although it is also important to note that as an ego's utility to others diminishes, the strength of the relationships may weaken (Burt, 1992). This scenario is possible in a socialization context where social agents no longer benefit from newcomers' knowledge or skills and begin searching for new resources, thus ceasing frequent contact or exchanges with newcomers and weakening tie strength. Similar to Hypotheses 3-7, Hypothesis 8 considered the moderating effects of newcomers' proactive personalities on the relationship between mutual-development behaviors and the tie strength indicators. According to Bateman and Crant (1993) and Crant (2000), individuals with proactive personalities are likely to frequently exhibit behaviors toward changing the situation so that it is favorable.

The non-significant results of Hypotheses 3-8 may be attributed to measurement error and sample size. In regard to Hypotheses 3-7, the mutual-development behaviors adapted from Cooper-Thomas and colleagues (2011) are relatively new to the literature, and the behaviors have not been empirically tested for validity and reliability. To date, no validated scale exists that simultaneously measures Cooper-Thomas and colleagues' (2011) mutual development behaviors so that a composite variable may be formed. Speaking to the findings of Hypothesis 8, nominally measuring how newcomers' behaviors influence tie strength may have also resulted in poor fit statistics regarding the moderation analysis that included the Proactive Personality Composite, which was a scaled variable. In addition to measurement error, the sample size provided in this study may have been less than what is needed to achieve the statistical power to detect effects among the multitude of variables in Hypotheses 3-8.

Findings Regarding Strong Tie Indicators and Frequency of Direct Inquiry

The ninth, tenth, and eleventh hypotheses were directed at examining how tie strength affected newcomers' use of direct inquiry as an information seeking behavior. As hypothesized, tie strength characterized by frequency of contact and closeness positively correlated with the frequency in which newcomers utilized direct inquiry. These findings are congruent with theoretical research suggesting that strong ties result in greater information sharing, social support, and social integration (Granovetter, 1973), as well as empirical research suggesting strong ties increase the ease of knowledge transfer (Reagans & McEvily, 2003). These findings make a contribution by providing a richer understanding of the role social agents play during socialization and how the strength of relationships between newcomers and social agents affects newcomers' information seeking behaviors. It is interesting to note that tie strength indicated by frequency of contact correlated more strongly with the Frequency of Direct Inquiry Composite ($r=.37$; $p<.01$) than did tie strength characterized by closeness ($r=.18$; $p<.05$). Specifically, these findings suggests that newcomers who are in frequent contact with social agents may experience a higher sense of psychological comfort when directly inquiring for information due to having repeatedly exhibited the behavior. While newcomers who are close to social agents are likely to inquire for information, they may be reluctant in utilizing direct inquiry to avoid social costs that could potentially damage the relationship if the newcomer has not directly inquired for information in the past.

Measurement error is a possible explanation for the non-significant findings between the reciprocity indicator and frequency of direct inquiry. The scale used to examine reciprocity was a single-item measure (Buunk et al., 1993) and is not typically

used in social network research. In Buunk and colleagues' (1993) study, only when participants answered *We are both providing the same amount of help and support to one another* (3) was reciprocity perceived to exist. Tie strength indicated by reciprocity was assessed in the same manner as the frequency of contact and closeness factors; hence a higher average denoted strong ties and a lower average denoted weak ties. This method may have not measured the true intent of participants to indicate existing reciprocity in their relationships with social agents. Developing a scale to measure reciprocity that is similar to Perry-Smith's (2006) scales for frequency of contact and closeness may allow future researchers to properly assess how reciprocity between actors influences newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry.

Findings Regarding Frequency of Direct Inquiry and Socialization Outcomes

Hypothesis 12 solely focused on the effects of newcomers' frequencies of direct inquiry on socialization outcomes, and the results were largely non-significant unlike previous findings by Morrison (1993b). However, frequency of direct inquiry was significantly related to the OCBO component of job performance (r=.43, p<.01). This is an interesting finding as the OCBO component is primarily concerned with an employee's behavior that is conducive to the organization's wellbeing (Williams & Anderson, 1991). After all, one of the goals of socialization is to shape newcomer behavior in order to maximize the benefit for both the organization and the newcomer (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979); thus participants in the present study may have been motivated to directly inquire for information relevant to the OCBO component of job performance. However, the present study did not examine information type as a variable, hence it cannot be determined if participants were in fact directly inquiring for

information that would directly affect the OCBO component. But given the focus of this thesis being on the ties between newcomers and social agents and how those ties may aid in successful socialization, the significant correlation between direct inquiry and OCBO is indicative of newcomers possessing a sense of PO fit through their relationships with social agents. A notable future research direction discussed in the next chapter may be to investigate the interaction effects of information type on the relationship between strong tie indicators and Williams and Anderson's (1991) three components of job performance.

A possibility for the non-significant findings between frequency of direct inquiry and the remaining two job performance components (IRB and OCBI) is measurement error. Little variance was found in the IRB Composite (SD=.39) and the OCBI Composite (SD=.51), which may have made it difficult to capture the effects of behaviors relevant to those components. Furthermore, the job performance scale used in this study was not originally designed as a self-report measure. Typically, dyadic pairs are used when collecting data on employee job performance where supervisors are included in the respondent population and they provide information regarding their employee's performance (Bauer & Green, 1994; Morrison, 1993b; Williams & Anderson, 1991). Because the IRB and OCBI scales emphasized the individuals' behaviors relative to their roles in the organizations, a halo effect (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977) may have been present due to employees having innate bias toward their own performance behaviors.

The non-significant findings regarding job satisfaction and organizational commitment may be due to measurement error. The coefficient reliability for the Job Satisfaction Composite in the present study (α=.63) was found to be lower than that of the original measure (α=.77). This thesis attempted to build on Morrison's (1993b) work

regarding newcomers' frequency of inquiry and socialization outcomes, but different measures were used to evaluate organizational commitment. When assessing the likelihood of newcomers to remain with their respective organizations, Morrison (1993b) used Kraut's (1975) intentions to leave scale (original α=.87) and the present study utilized Klein and colleagues' (2011) organizational commitment scale. Although the two separate measures address similar socialization outcomes, both are different regarding the items presented to participants and the variables being measured. The inconsistency of the organizational commitment measure in the present study is a possibility for the non-significant findings.

Another possibility for the non-significant results in Hypothesis 12 is the type of socialization outcomes being examined. Newcomers' job satisfaction, performance, and commitment are distal outcomes and are normally evaluated at the end of the socialization process (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012). The relevant timeframe established for this study mandated that participants must have been employed at their current organizations between six and twelve months, thus potentially not allowing enough time for newcomers to experience the outcomes assessed in the present study. An alternative would be to examine the effects of direct inquiry on more proximal outcomes such as role clarity (Bauer et al., 2007), acceptance by insiders (Fisher, 1985), and performance self-efficacy (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012).

Chapter 7: Conclusion

This study has attempted to advance the management literature by continuing to build on the findings of previous research that has examined the reciprocal exchanges between socialization and social networks. The strengths and limitations of the study will be addressed first in this chapter, followed by the theoretical and practical implications of the study. Then, future research directions will be discussed and subsequently, final remarks will conclude this thesis.

Strengths and Limitations

The present study possessed certain strengths despite its limitations. First, this thesis continues to connect two literatures that have been mostly connected by theoretical research. While the results were mostly non-significant, the significant findings supporting a positive relationship between strong tie indicators and frequency of direct inquiry suggest that the literatures conceptually overlap, and further research is needed. Secondly, this study evaluated tie strength using three different indicators. This approach is uncommon in social network research (e.g., Seibert, Kraimer, & Liden, 2001) due to each operating independently of one another (Granovetter, 1983). Measuring multiple strong tie indicators in a single study is necessary to advance network research, as the findings may suggest that one indicator results in more positive or negative outcomes compared to others. When building on the findings of the present study, future research should maintain its strengths and also improve upon its limitations so that the effects of strong ties on socialization can be better understood.

A number of limitations deserve consideration when evaluating the findings of this study. First, the sample size in the present study (n=154) is relatively low when considering previous studies that have examined social networks (Marsden & Campbell, 1984). A larger sample size would have achieved the statistical power needed to produce significant findings. Increasing the sample size would not only yield more available network data and allow the strong tie indicators to be better evaluated, but also possibly increase the respective coefficients of those validated scales used in this study. Further, not every participant indicated that he or she exhibited all of the mutual development behaviors toward their listed social agents; thus, some mutual-development behavior totals serving as variables were low and forced the achieved power to be even lower. Should this study be repeated, a larger sample size would increase the statistical power and may provide supportive findings to some hypotheses.

A second limitation of this study is the misalignment between sample type and study design. The cross-sectional design may have created temporal discrepancies between the hypothesized antecedents and the strong tie indicators, as well as newcomers' frequencies of direct inquiry and the examined socialization outcomes. The average tenure of participants was 8.7 months, suggesting that participants had not progressed far enough through the socialization process to develop strong ties to social agent, in addition to not having enough time to experience a level of comfort in exhibiting mutual-development behaviors. In Chapter 3, it was mentioned that no social network research exists that clarifies how long strong ties take to fully develop, but it is suggested that strong ties develop over the long-term (Granovetter, 1973). Furthermore, the socialization outcomes examined in this study are distal outcomes (Bauer & Erdogan,

2012) and participants have not worked for their respective organizations long enough to experience higher levels of job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Additionally, the average tenure of participants is indicative that participants may have still been learning about their jobs; therefore they have yet to also experience higher levels of job performance. A longitudinal study that measured the effects of the proposed antecedents, strong tie indicators, frequency of direct inquiry, and distal outcomes in intervals would provide scholars with a broad picture of this process, rather the snapshot afforded by this cross-sectional study.

Klein and Heuser (2008) noted that the socialization process could take up to two years. Because the present study was cross-sectional, only a small part of the entire socialization process was captured. Moreover, this study did not follow the standard network research method. Social network research typically follows a two-stage approach to data collection where the researcher first gathers all of the contacts from participants, and then uses an instrument to examine variables (e.g., Perry-Smith, 2006). This approach is ideal as it allows the researcher to ensure that participants are not forgetting contacts due to the pressure of finishing a survey and the researcher may provide a reference list containing the respective contacts listed to each participant. To more effectively evaluate the relationships between variables involved in socialization and to ensure the accuracy of participants' networks, it is critical that a replicated study follow the two-stage approach to social network research and to also collect longitudinal data.

Another limitation of the present study is that all of the data was self-reported. Participants may have responded to the survey items based on they think they should feel and behave, rather than how they actually feel and behave. Relatedly, participants may

have also reported how they wish to perceive their tie strength—in terms of frequency of contact, closeness, and reciprocity—with social agents rather than the actual strength of those ties. Some variables were appropriately evaluated using only self-report measures since the study examined how beneficial participants perceived the RBIWG activities to be and the perceived helpfulness of social agents, in addition to examining participants' job satisfaction and commitment. When this study is repeated, however, it is important that social agents also provide feedback on the strength of their ties with newcomers, as well as how frequently newcomers seek information via direct inquiry, newcomers' job performance, and if newcomers actually exhibited mutual-development behaviors. Collecting data from these three sources would offer more accurate insight on how RBIWG activities and mutual-development behaviors affect tie strength, how tie strength influences newcomers' frequencies of direct inquiry, and how those frequencies of direct inquiry impact socialization outcomes.

A final limitation of this thesis concerns the statistical analyses that were not used. While linear regression was the main analysis applied in this thesis, other statistical methods, including structural equation modeling (SEM), hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), and non-parametric statistics, may have yielded a clearer picture of the data. SEM allows for better fit-statistics by assessing the effects of latent variables (i.e., non-observable quantities) on observed variables, and thus providing a structural model representing the relationship between latent variables and their manifest (Nachtigall, Kroehne, Funke, & Steyer, 2003). Had a larger sample size been attained, using SEM in the present study may have detected the effects of latent variables, such as psychological comfort or trust between newcomers and social agents, on tie strength, for example. Klein

and colleagues (2015) utilized HLM to account for the nesting of employees in different organizations since variance was likely to exist among the onboarding programs in which newcomers participated. This study examined the data at a single level, and did not consider that participants nested in different organizations are likely to be more homogenous in terms of the onboarding practices they experienced. Non-parametric statistics would have also been useful when analyzing the data. A chi-squared test, for example, would have detected whether or not strong ties indicated by frequency of contact varied as a function of the different RBIWG activities offered among the four organizations. Should this study be repeated, these statistical methods may offer a stronger analysis of the data.

Implications

The findings of this thesis provide more information regarding how newcomers' relationships with social agents impact the socialization process. As previously mentioned, newcomers, social agents, and organizations are all actors that facilitate the socialization process, and the social network literature denotes that socialization is a potential outcome of employees' interpersonal networks. Few studies, however, have attempted to integrate the two areas by measuring how relational characteristics of newcomers' interpersonal networks relate to their level of socialization (e.g., Morrison, 2002b). This study not only attempted to build on this small body of research, but also offered a conceptual model that illustrates a novel process regarding how newcomers, social agents, and organizations facilitate socialization. This model incorporated onboarding activities and newcomer proactivity as antecedents to strong ties so as to reveal how those ties enhance socialization outcomes through direct inquiry. Based on

the findings of this study and previous research, the aforementioned model is complex, and the relationships between socialization actors are dynamic and subject to change based on individual and organizational factors (e.g., level of newcomer proactivity or the design of an organization's onboarding program).

This study has implications for the socialization and social network literatures, since it was largely built on previous work from both bodies of research. First, this thesis is a call for more integrative socialization research. The study of socialization has undoubtedly evolved since being examined by the likes of Van Maanen and Schein (1979) and Feldman (1976), such that numerous factors are now taken into account when considering what facilitates socialization beyond the tactical dimensions that organizations utilize. Despite the various socialization research perspectives (refer to Chapter 2), many studies neglect the dynamic relationships between perspectives. The present study centers on the undeveloped relationship between the newcomer and social agents perspectives and the emerging body of research on onboarding practices. Unlike a number of previous studies exploring socialization, this thesis attempted to integrate multiple constructs from different socialization perspectives with the aim of understanding how newcomers connect with social agents and how those connections may be indispensable. By applying emergent constructs such as the IWG framework and mutual-development behaviors as antecedents to relationship development between newcomers and social agents, this study offers a unique process to how newcomers may begin to experience a level of comfort in asking social agents for information—which is critical to successful socialization (Ashford, 1986; Morrison, 1993b). While the findings were largely non-significant, the theoretical underpinnings of this study support the

intricate relationships between the constructs being examined (refer to Chapter 3). In sum, this thesis implies that future work should more frequently synthesize multiple socialization perspectives and constructs to drive future research that is theoretically and empirically comprehensive.

A second implication of this thesis is that it builds on the small body of research that has addressed the exchanges between the socialization and social network literatures. Previous literature reviews of social networks have outlined socialization as a latent outcome (e.g., Brass, 2012), but its potential is mostly theoretical with the exception of Morrison's (2002b) study supporting that notion. The SNAS is well grounded in theory (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2012), but little empirical evidence exists supporting the theoretical relationship between socialization and social networks. While the present study mostly produced non-significant findings regarding socialization outcomes, it does offer some statistically significant evidence suggesting that tie strength—a measure of relational embeddedness—increases the frequency in which newcomers directly inquire for information from social agents. Prior research examining newcomer information seeking behaviors suggests that newcomers' personal traits (Ashford, 1986), as well as the type of information needed and the information source (Morrison, 1993b) are the main determinants of when or how often newcomers use direct inquiry. Unlike previous studies, this thesis offers that tie strength indicated by frequency of contact or closeness should be considered an antecedent to direct inquiry—the most effective mode of information seeking (Ashford, 1986; Morrison, 1993b). On the other hand, the social network literature has supported strong ties to be a predictor of information exchanges (Granovetter, 1983); however, no research could be located that directly addresses the

relationship between strong ties and information seeking modes and this thesis fills that void. Further, the findings regarding strong ties and the frequency of direct inquiry support the postulation of the SNAS stating that strong ties enhance information sharing (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2012). Thus, strong ties between newcomers and social agents may affect the socialization process.

In terms of practical implications, this thesis has attempted to emphasize the importance of strong relationships between newcomers and social agents, in addition to the importance of newcomers' perceptions of how helpful social agents to be. Since it is clearer that newcomers who frequently communicate and are close to their supervisors and coworkers are likely to ask for information, organizations should devise methods to facilitate and maintain that frequent communication and closeness between individuals. For example, organizations may facilitate and maintain the frequent contact between newcomers and supervisors by redesigning reporting methods so that newcomers can easily ask for performance feedback and other information. Similarly, organizations may elect to undergo minor restructuring to place newcomers in closer proximity to their coworkers to increase frequent, face-to-face communication. To facilitate and maintain closeness organizations may consider offering activities that promote personal interaction outside of the company to build social relationships, which have been found to strengthen working relationships (Holahan & Moos, 1983). However, if organizations strategically situate newcomers to facilitate interaction with supervisors and coworkers, it may be pertinent that organizations conduct job analyses to evaluate variances in knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) among jobs to ensure that social agents possess the appropriate information newcomers require. Doing so may increase the likelihood that

newcomers will perceive social agents as helpful and additionally increase the possibility of future communication. Moreover, organizations should also determine that the jobs require similar levels of interaction so as to avoid the negative consequences of forced contact (Labianca & Brass, 2006), such as newcomers developing adverse perceptions of social agents and reducing communication and information seeking frequencies.

Future Research Directions

Many questions have been raised through the completion of this thesis. Most notably, substantial work is needed from the newcomer proactivity research perspective—specifically, the types of proactive behaviors that newcomers exhibit. Previous research on newcomer proactivity has traditionally focused on either the relationship between specified individual differences and the level of proactivity (e.g., Ashford, 1986) or information seeking as a proactive behavior (e.g., Morrison, 1993a). Only recently did Cooper-Thomas and colleagues (2011) offer a comprehensive taxonomy of proactive behaviors; thus, no validated scale(s) exists to statistically test the relationships between those behaviors and their intended outcomes (i.e., change-environment, change-self, mutual-development). While scholars have developed scales to measure small behavior groups comprised of select behaviors from all three categories (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996), future research should be devoted to developing separate, valid, and reliable measurements to statistically test each independent category of Cooper-Thomas and colleagues' (2011) proactive behavior taxonomy. Because jobs vary by organization, scope, and other factors, newcomers may be less inclined to display behaviors from one category compared to others. For example, a newcomer entering an organization where he or she knows all or most of the social agents from previous

encounters would be less likely to exhibit mutual-development behaviors since relationships may already exist. Alternatively, that newcomer may demonstrate change-role/environment behaviors to make their new situation more predictable; hence, separate, validated scales would allow researchers to account for this variance. Quite similarly, the scope of research varies by study, and separate measurements for each proactive behavior category would afford researchers the ability to assess a category of proactive behaviors in an appropriate context (e.g., the effects of mutual-development behaviors on strong tie development between newcomers and social agents).

Another future research direction concerns the application of the IWG framework to the relational characteristics of interpersonal networks and if organizations can force strong ties between newcomers and social agents. It is encouraging to see more studies examine the use of specific onboarding activities within the IWG framework (e.g., Klein et al., 2015), but future research is needed to assess the effectiveness of those activities in a social network context. The IWG activities examined in this thesis were derived from Klein and Polin's (2012) list based on the activity requiring newcomers to interact with social agents, but the findings were not supportive of the hypothesized relationship. From a social network perspective, substantial research suggests the more opportunities that two individuals have to interact at work, the more likely they will establish a pattern of frequent communication (Brass et al., 2004; Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1973; 1983). Operating under this logic, newcomers and social agents that have more opportunities to interact will likely develop a strong tie. Theoretically, RBIWG activities would be conducive to developing strong ties indicated by frequent contact. A single brief occurrence shortly after organizational entry may not provide ideal conditions for

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newcomers and social agents to establish communication protocol. Moreover, network research suggests that increased opportunities for frequent interaction can result in attitude similarity (Brass, 2012; Brass et al., 2004)—an antecedent to strong ties indicated by closeness (Granovetter, 1973). Despite this considerable theoretical research supporting that strong ties will be a product of effectively implemented RBIWG activities, forcing interaction between actors can have negative consequences (Labianca & Brass, 2006). Similar actors naturally tend to interact more frequently due to their like attitudes and dispositions (McPherson et al., 2001), and organizations that purposefully structure interactions between dissimilar newcomers and social agents may create unfavorable conditions for strong tie development. Future research should explore how the frequency and duration of RBIWG activities affect strong tie indicators, as well as the moderating effects of actor similarity during these structured interactions.

A third and closely related future research direction is the effects of the IWG framework on the structural characteristics of newcomers' networks (e.g., network density). As mentioned above, the RBIWG activities provide newcomers with opportunities to meet and interact with social agents with whom newcomers may not normally have the chance; thus, RBIWG activities present newcomers with networking opportunities. Morrison (2002b) observed structural characteristics of newcomers' networks to be positively related to organizational knowledge, task mastery, and role clarity and Seibert, Kraimer, and Liden (2001) found career success to be a positive outcome of interpersonal networks. Scholars may consider a study in which those structural characteristics explored by Morrison (2002b) mediate the relationship between RBIWG activities and proximal socialization outcomes. Future research should also

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longitudinally examine the mediating effects of structural characteristics between RBIWG activities and distal socialization outcomes, such as career success.

Another interesting future research direction is to examine how variance in tie strength impacts newcomers' preferences regarding information source, type, and mode, as well as the moderating effects of social and psychological costs. The findings of this thesis suggest that strong ties positively correlate with newcomers' frequency of direct inquiry; however, the present study did not control for tie strength based on information source although two distinctly different sources (supervisors and coworkers) were included. Research from the social agents perspective (refer to Chapter 2) suggests that newcomers utilize supervisors and coworkers differently based on the type of information needed (Bravo et al., 2003), which consequently affects how newcomers acquire the information using either monitoring or direct inquiry (Morrison, 1993b). Borgatti and Cross (2003) noted that tie strength does play a role in an ego's decision to ask alters for information, but given the uncertainty that newcomers experience and the various types of information they require, tie strength may not be only one factor influencing information seeking behaviors. Furthermore, information seeking is generally accompanied by different costs (Borgatti & Cross, 2003), such as social embarrassment or self-doubt; therefore, the moderating effects of these costs should also be investigated since newcomers tend to minimize costs by using monitoring—a less costly, but also less effective information seeking mode. Scholars who pursue this research direction should begin by analyzing tie strength between newcomers and their respective information sources. Scholars should then subsequently analyze variances among information sources, types, and modes that mediate the relationship between tie strength and

socialization outcomes, in addition to examining how certain costs moderate those relationships.

A final future research direction would be to explore the utility and nature of strong ties during adversity—a construct similar to uncertainty, which is a major theme in socialization. No research exists that examines the relationship between strong ties and adversity at the macro and micro levels. It is well noted in the literature that strong ties offer information and resource sharing (e.g., Granovetter, 1973), and at the macro level, network actors may utilize their strong ties to acquire information regarding organizational conditions in order to successfully navigate adverse events (e.g., power struggles among executives). Other forms of macro-level adversity, such as downsizing, may damage the trust or psychological comfort between actors, and consequently reduce the tie strength between them. At the micro level, adversity that includes the diminishment of departmental assets, for example, may result in the deterioration of strong ties between structurally equivalent actors. Because those actors are motivated to secure similar resources (Brass, 2012), they are more likely to be willing to compete against one another. Considering the possible effects of adversity on strong ties and the potential utilities of strong ties during adversity, further research should be conducted to examine the prospective multiplex relationship.

Final Remarks

This thesis was theoretically successful in advancing the exchange between organizational socialization and social networks by offering a novel approach to understanding how strong ties—indicated by frequency of contact, closeness, and reciprocity—between newcomers and social agents can positively impact newcomers'

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frequencies of direct inquiry. Further, this thesis aimed to conceptualize two groupings of antecedents regarding how newcomers and their organizations alike can facilitate strong tie development. Towards this aim, select IWG activities were identified as RBIWG activities, which are those onboarding activities that promote communication, interaction, and relationship development between newcomers and social agents by structuring opportunities for interaction, which were hypothesized to result in strong ties indicated by frequency of contact. Mutual-development behaviors were also identified as antecedents to all three strong tie indicators, as these behaviors are often demonstrated by newcomers with the intention of maximizing the shared benefits of a strong relationship, such as information and resource sharing. After statistical testing, two of the three indicators, frequency of contact and closeness, were found to be positively associated with newcomers' frequencies of direct inquiry. Further work integrating both of these subject areas will ideally generate more interest in the exchanges between socialization and social networks so the reciprocal effects may be conceptualized to answer more complex questions in management.

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Appendix A: Copy of Survey Instrument

Welcome and thank you for your participation!

About the Study
This study is being conducted by a researcher at Eastern Kentucky University. The purpose of this study is to better understand how the strength of ties between individuals affects organizational socialization—the process of new employees "learning the ropes" at companies. This study involves minimal risk and while your participation will not directly benefit you, the knowledge gained will be of tremendous value to the researcher, organizations, and the field of management. At the beginning of this survey, you will be asked to provide the first names of your immediate supervisor and coworkers whose work is relevant to your job. This is for your reference in subsequent questions. Once the survey is completed, the first names you provided will be deleted.

Your Participation
To be eligible to participate in this study, you must be 18 years of age or older and currently employed. Your participation involves the completion of this single online survey, which will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. You may elect to start and then stop the survey at any time, as well as skip any questions you do not wish to answer.

Confidentiality
Your answers are kept on a secure, password-protected computer. Your individual answers will only be seen by the researcher and the academic advisor associated with this study for the sake of statistical analyses. No specific answers provided by any respondent will be shared with others. The reports prepared for this study will be aggregate results of how large collections of individuals answered the questions in this survey.

Please contact Colton Burgess [email: colton_burgess10@mymail.eku.edu] if you have any questions about this research or your rights as a participant and if you may have any concerns or complaints related to this study. You should print this page so that you have this contact information for your records.

Participation Agreement
You are being asked to participate in a research study being conducted by Colton Burgess at Eastern Kentucky University. ***I have read this page, am 18 years or older and am currently employed. I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study, and by clicking to continue on to the survey, I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.***

If you do not wish to participate or begin the survey and wish to stop, simply close this window.

This survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. The following page will ask you to list the **FIRST** names of your immediate work supervisor and coworkers whose work is relevant to your job. No identifiable information, such as the first names of your colleagues that you provide, will be shared.

Please list the **FIRST** name of your immediate work supervisor in the first space. In the following spaces, list the **FIRST** names of your coworkers whose work is relevant to your job.

Note: You may not need all of the spaces provided to list the first names of your coworkers, but use as many you think is necessary. Only those spaces you fill with first names will be carried on to subsequent questions.

Supervisor's first name   _____
Coworker's first name   _____
Coworker's first name   _____
Coworker's first name   _____
Coworker's first name   _____
Coworker's first name   _____
Coworker's first name   _____
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Coworker's first name   _____
Coworker's first name   _____
Coworker's first name   _____
Coworker's first name   _____
Coworker's first name   _____

Thinking of how often you communicate with your supervisor and coworkers...

Please use the scale provided to indicate **how frequently you communicate with your supervisor and each coworker you listed.**

Frequency of Contact[1]	Less Often	Several Times a Year	Once a Month	Several Times a Month	Several Times a Week	Daily
Supervisor's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○

---

[1] Scale names were not shown to participants

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Frequency of Contact (continued)	Less often	Several Times a Year	Once a Month	Several Times a Month	Several Times a Week	Daily
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○	○

Thinking of your relationships with your supervisor and coworkers...

Please use the scale provided to indicate **how close you are to your supervisor and each coworker you listed.**

Closeness	Acquaintance	Distant Colleague	Friendly Colleague	Good Friend	Close Friend
Supervisor's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○

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Closeness (*continued*)	Acquaintance	Distant Colleague	Friendly Colleague	Good Friend	Close Friend
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○

Thinking of the support you provide and receive from your supervisor and coworkers...
Please use the scale provided to indicate the level of help and support you provide and receive from your supervisor and each coworker you listed.

5 – This person is providing much more help and support to me than I provide in return.
4 – This person is providing more help and support to me than I provide in return.
3 – We are both providing the same amount of help and support to one another.
2 – I am providing more help and support than I receive in return.
1 – I am providing much more help and support than I receive in return.

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Reciprocity	1	2	3	4	5
Supervisor's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○
Coworker's first name	○	○	○	○	○

Thinking of the behaviors you may have shown towards your supervisor and coworkers…

Consider the five types of behaviors shown below. Then place a check next to each of the behaviors you have shown towards the supervisor and coworkers you listed.

You may have shown more than one type of behavior towards your supervisor and coworkers, so be sure to select all of the behavior types that apply.

Mutual-Development Behaviors / Behavior Description	Socializing — Informally interacting and/or attending social events with colleagues outside of work.	Befriending — Being open, friendly, and helpful towards colleagues at work.	Teaming — Being visibly involved as a team member.	Exchanging — Trading resources/favors with colleagues at work.	Flattering — Making others feel good about themselves.
Supervisor's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Mutual-Development Behaviors (*continued*) Behavior Description	Socializing Informally interacting and/or attending social events with colleagues outside of work.	Befriending Being open, friendly, and helpful towards colleagues at work.	Teaming Being visibly involved as a team member.	Exchanging Trading resources/favors with colleagues at work.	Flattering Making others feel good about themselves.
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Coworker's first name	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Thinking of your behavior at work...

Consider the statements below and indicate **the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement.**

Proactive Personality	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am constantly on the lookout for new ways to improve my life.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I feel driven to make a difference in my community, and maybe the world.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I tend to let others take the initiative to start new projects.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Wherever I have been, I have been a powerful force for constructive change.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I enjoy facing and overcoming obstacles to my ideas.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Nothing is more exciting than seeing my ideas turn into reality.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I see something I don't like, I fix it.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
No matter what the odds, if I believe in something, I will make it happen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I love being a champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Proactive Personality (*continued*)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I excel at identifying opportunities.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am always looking for better ways to do things.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I believe in an idea, no obstacle will prevent me from making it happen.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I love to challenge the status quo.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
When I have a problem, I tackle it head-on.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I am great at turning problems into opportunities.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
I can spot a good opportunity long before others can.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
If I see someone in trouble, I help out in any way I can.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Thinking of the times you have asked your supervisor and coworkers for information...

Please read the following statements and indicate the frequency in which you ask your colleagues for job-related **information.**

Frequency of Direct Inquiry	Never	Once a Month	A Few Times a Month	Once a Week	A Few Times a Week	Once a Day	A Few Times a Day
Seek job-related information from your supervisor.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Seek job-related information from your coworkers.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Thinking of your performance at work...

Please read the following statements about behaviors pertaining to your job and indicate **how often you show these behaviors.**

Job Performance (IRB[a], OCBI[b], OCBO[c])	Never	Not Usually	Sometimes	Usually	Always
I adequately complete assigned duties.[a]	○	○	○	○	○
I fulfill responsibilities specified in my job description.[a]	○	○	○	○	○
I perform tasks that are expected of me.[a]	○	○	○	○	○
I meet the formal performance requirements of my job.[a]	○	○	○	○	○
I engage in activities that will directly affect my performance evaluation.[a]	○	○	○	○	○
I neglect aspects of the job I am obligated to perform.[a]	○	○	○	○	○
I fail to perform essential duties.[a]	○	○	○	○	○
I help others who have been absent.[b]	○	○	○	○	○
I help others who have heavy work loads.[b]	○	○	○	○	○
I assist my supervisor with his/her work (when not asked).[b]	○	○	○	○	○
I take time to listen to coworkers' problems and worries.[b]	○	○	○	○	○
I go out of the way to help new employees.[b]	○	○	○	○	○
I take a personal interest in other employees.[b]	○	○	○	○	○
I pass along information to coworkers.[b]	○	○	○	○	○
My attendance at work is above the norm.[c]	○	○	○	○	○
I give advance notice when unable to come to work.[c]	○	○	○	○	○
I take undeserved breaks.[c]	○	○	○	○	○
I spend a great deal of time with personal phone conversations.[c]	○	○	○	○	○
I complain about insignificant things at work.[c]	○	○	○	○	○
I conserve and protect organizational property.[c]	○	○	○	○	○
I adhere to informal rules devised to maintain order.[c]	○	○	○	○	○

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Thinking of your feelings towards your job...

Please read the following statements and indicate **the degree to which you agree or disagree with each statement.**

Job Satisfaction	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
All in all, I am satisfied with my job.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
In general, I don't like my job.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
In general, I like working here.	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Thinking of your feelings toward your organization...

Please answer the following questions using the scale provided.

Organizational Commitment	Not at All	Slightly	Moderately	Quite a Bit	Extremely
How committed are you to your organization?	○	○	○	○	○
To what extent do you care about your organization?	○	○	○	○	○
How dedicated are you to your organization?	○	○	○	○	○
To what extent have you chosen to be committed to your organization?	○	○	○	○	○

The next two pages of questions will refer to the onboarding program you experienced after joining your current organization.

An onboarding program is defined as the initial few weeks on the job in which you were introduced to your new role, the people you would be working with, and the organization as a whole.

Upon being hired and starting a new job at your current organization, you may have experienced certain onboarding activities to help you become acquainted with your new role and new colleagues.

Please indicate whether each activity you experienced that is listed below was **formal**, **informal**, or **did not occur**. Select **formal** if the activity was required by the organization. Select **informal** if the activity was recommended or suggested, but NOT required by the organization.

For those activities you select as **formal** or **informal**, use the scale below to rate the helpfulness of each.

5 – Extremely beneficial
4 – Very beneficial
3 – Quite beneficial
2 – Somewhat beneficial
1 – Not beneficial at all

RBIWG Activities	Offering of Activity	How Beneficial
My supervisor set aside uninterrupted blocks of time to meet with me.		
I received on-the-job training from my coworkers.		
I attended an orientation with fellow newcomers.		
I attended sessions where expert colleagues gave presentations on certain tasks or procedures.		
I participated in exercises to get to know my fellow colleagues.		
I attended a gathering to get to know my fellow colleagues.		
I was invited to a social event to get to know my fellow colleagues.		
A fellow colleague was assigned as my "buddy" to help answer my questions.		

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During orientation, different people may have helped you learn important information.

Please indicate if your supervisor or coworkers were available to help you during the onboarding process by selecting **yes** or **no** from the drop-down menu.

For those that you indicate as available, please also rate how helpful they were to you using the scale below found in the drop-down menu.

5 – Extremely helpful
4 – Very helpful
3 – Quite helpful
2 – Somewhat helpful
1 – Not helpful

Social Agent Helpfulness	Availability	Helpfulness
Supervisor	___	___
Coworkers	___	___

To better understand who has participated in this survey, please answer the following questions.

Please enter your age in years: _____

What is your gender?   Male ○   Female ○

How long have you worked at your company?
Years: _____
Months: _____

What is your employment status?
○ Fulltime   ○ Part-time   ○ Temporary   ○ Seasonal   ○ Volunteer (unpaid)

The survey is now complete. Thank you for your participation.

If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints regarding this survey or the research as a whole, please contact Colton Burgess [email: **colton_burgess10@mymail.eku.edu**].

Disclaimer: Individual responses will not be disclosed and data gathered may only be shared with the academic advisor associated with this study for statistical analyses.